

# **Teachers' Labour Process; Proletarianisation and the Greek Case**

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## ABSTRACT

The focus of the thesis is teachers' labour process in upper secondary education in Greece, as this is structured by the introduction of prescribed and standardized curricula.

At the centre of our theoretical approach lies the Marxian theory of labour process and its development of the proletarianisation thesis. The theoretical approach, that is adopted by this study, is a critical approach to the labour process theory and its proletarianisation thesis. The labour process theory, we argue, studies teachers' labour process by particularly focusing on the introduction of predetermined and standardized curricula which, as is argued, result in teachers' proletarianisation, that is to say teachers' autonomy is restricted and they are not able to exercise any control on their labour process.

Our theoretical reservations, as far as the labour theory is concerned, are related to the way teachers' labour process is conceived and understood. More specifically, we argue, that labour process theory does not conceive teachers' labour process as a production process and consequently does not take into consideration the production relations, in and of production. Hence this study argues that teachers' labour process is shaped, apart from the curriculum, by the parameter "students" and to be more concrete, by "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge. Without taking into consideration and theorizing the factor "students", labour process theory, we argue, is unable to conceive and understand the "production relations", developed in the classroom, namely the relations developed between teachers and curriculum as relations *mediated* by students' presence. In short labour process theory has a narrow concept of "skill" and "de-skilling".

Finally, we argue, as our findings indicate, that proletarianisation should be theorized and conceptualized not as a homogeneous process but should be seen as a process which is characterized by variations in its modalities, in relation to particular socio-historical conjunctures.

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It is not interesting to be described the visible but to be made  
visible what is not.

Paul Klee

## **Part I - Setting the problem: Teachers' Work**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

#### **1. Starting to theorise.**

This study is about teachers' labour process and the proletarianisation thesis. The central concern of the thesis is to identify "main tendencies" which set up differences and polarises the experiences and practices of teachers working in different educational contexts. More specifically, this study focuses on variations in teachers' labour processes in Greek upper secondary education (Lyceum). It attempts to investigate teachers' labour process as this was shaped and structured after the introduction, by the government of the Socialist party (P.A.S.O.K) in the '80s, of a system of selection for entrance to Higher Education, known as Desmes. The introduction of that system, we argue, resulted in restricting teachers' autonomy and increasing control by the educational authorities over their labour process.

Before we proceed to the development of the study, I would like to present the reasons for choosing the specific research topic. These reasons can be distinguished in two categories: the personal/substantive and the objective ones. The first category has to do with my professional career as a teacher.

I started my career at the beginning of the '90s be consistent on this throughout in a Lyceum in the West part of Attica, a working class area, where I was teaching Sociology. Sociology as a subject was considered, along with three other subjects (History, Mathematics and Modern Greek-Composition), as a compulsory one for students interested in doing socio-economic studies in Higher Education. It was part of the examinations which students took for their entrance into Higher Education. This meant that all those students were supposed to have a great interest in Sociology and, generally speaking, were thought to be "good material" for a teacher.

The above situation seemed to offer the prospect of an educational context in which the whole teaching experience would be interesting and creative, but the reality was

completely different. Students were not interested in Sociology as a body of knowledge, but were exclusively interested in the entrance exams for Higher Education. No matter what or how I taught, or what pace my teaching followed, everything was related, in the students' minds, to exam preparation. The repeated reaction to my efforts to go beyond the exams focus and add something more was: "we do not need this, it is not useful for the exams, it is not required for the General exams", and thus students did not pay any attention to my teaching. In addition, most of the time students made comments related to the way a unit was taught at frontesteria<sup>1</sup>, so in a way they made comparisons between schools and frontesteria. I had the feeling I had been made redundant as a teacher, and that all my activities in class had to focus exclusively on the exam requirements and preparation.

As for the "objective" reasons for this study, these had to do with the fact that no attention had been paid to or research interest manifested for the above subject thus far. At the time there were no research studies or theoretical argumentation in Greece on teachers' labour process and work in general.

All this motivated me to study teachers' working experiences and, more specifically, teachers' labour process in depth and in a systematic way. In order for the area of the study to be initially explored, I decided upon an empirical strategy involving semi-structured interviews with people who are quite familiar with teachers' work and their labour process. These people were: four School Advisors (two Mathematicians and two of Greek Literature, or "Philologist") and three Teacher unionists from three different political streams. These initial interviews were a kind of exploratory study which enabled me to establish a firmer sense of the problems I was interested in. More specifically, three out of four School Advisors strongly agreed that *Desmes* restrict teachers' autonomy. The same view was shared by all Teacher unionists. It is also said that *Desmes are standardized* courses which restrict teachers' autonomy (three School Advisors and three Teacher unionists).

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<sup>1</sup> frontesteria: private evening preparatory centres, i.e., commercial firms which specialise in preparing students for exams.

In general, it is believed that *teaching Desmes means that the exam requirements strongly influence the way teachers work*. School Advisors and Teacher unionists also think that frontesteria affect teachers' work. As a School Advisor of Greek Literature characteristically says:

*...frontesteria give students "recipes", they standardise knowledge. There is competition between the two. The Lyceum becomes a frontistirio.*

Thus, the reports I obtained from the above-mentioned people strengthened my confidence and encouraged me to develop my theoretical argumentation on teachers' labour process and design this study.

An issue which could be raised here is the relationship of every-day experience with scientific knowledge, the relationship between experience and theory and how we can transform this every-day experience into a piece of scientific knowledge, in other words, how our everyday experiences can be "scientificised".

It is argued here that experience and theory are not two distinct loci but, as Kuhn maintains, "what is considered as observation or as fact are 'soaked' by theory (theory-laden)" (1962, p.37). The discourse of experience is not formulated in a social vacuum. Issues such as the educational background of the subject, the social conditions under which an experience is born, the way the subject "has learnt" to "see", "listen" and "read" the social reality, all this shapes an experience mediated by theoretical connotations and references. This means that experience and theory can hardly be seen as two distinct entities; they are, in fact, interrelated.

In this study the term "experience" signifies the knowledge of the subject which comes from personal contact with the social reality. It is considered as a stimulus, located in a concrete historical and social context, which can be used to 'crank start' the process of theorising. In other words, this study takes the opportunity to compare our private experience to that of others or, as Bauman (1990, p.10) puts it, "to see the *social* in the *individual* and the *general* in the *particular*".

## 2. Area of investigation

Having the experience, as described above, of teaching in a state school, with the problems I referred to, my interest in dealing with teachers' work in depth was very much stimulated. The focus of the study will be "teachers' labour process". The term "labour process" signifies the process whereby human labour - in our case, teachers' labour - is transformed into use values. In particular, teaching as a labour process will be elaborated and discussed in detail in a separate section (2.8).

More specifically, this piece of research will examine teachers' labour process in Greece as this was structured by the introduction of the system of Desmes<sup>2</sup> in Lyceum (upper secondary education), a system which remained in effect from 1984 to 1999. The particular issues we will attempt to address are those of autonomy and control of teachers' labour process. These issues will be studied in relation to two factors: the introduction by the state of the system of Desmes, as such, and the significance of the effect of the private education sector (frontesteria) on teachers' work in state schools.

The central hypothesis of this study is that the introduction of the system of Desmes in the Lyceum contributed to reducing teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process. This is not to argue that there were two eras, as far as teachers' work and issues of autonomy and control are concerned. We do not assume one period that was characterized by autonomy and a subsequent one which was not. Conversely, this study will claim that the introduction of the system of Desmes signaled a period where teachers' autonomy was relatively reduced as concerns supervision and control by the educational authorities. At the same time, the role of "para-education" (frontesteria) was upgraded and a "frontistirialistic" approach to teaching was established and became increasingly significant for state schools. I say that teachers' work was relatively reduced in terms of supervision and control, because teachers' work at school had to follow and take into consideration the increased requirements and needs of entrance to Higher Education exams, which undermined the

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<sup>2</sup> Desmes: in Greek it means the "bunch" of subjects in which students take examinations in order to enter Higher Education, the equivalent of A-levels. They are predetermined curricula. I would say that they can be seen as "groups" of subjects.

significance of students' educational needs in the teachers' perspectives on their work.

The stimulus for conducting this study was my experiences as a teacher in the Lyceum. This, I would say, might not have been important in itself. What I mean here is that what contributed substantially to my conducting this research project, what probably played the most decisive role, was an objective factor, namely, the fact that the area of "teachers' labour process" was unexplored, almost a *terra incognita* in Greece, one could argue. Instead, there has been much attention paid to the issue of access to Higher Education, which is considered to be the main indicator of "equal opportunities" (Katsikas & Kavadias 1994, 1996, Kyridis, 1997). The lack of interest in researching teachers' labour process and issues of autonomy and control on their work processes in Greece might be related to the fact that the education system is a highly centralized one and, consequently, issues such as teachers' autonomy and control are, to a large extent, predetermined by the extensive presence of the state.

Also an issue, which emerged when I began to examine the teachers' labour process literature, showed me that there is a need for undertaking this empirical study. To be more specific, although the literature includes a substantial volume of theoretical work done on teachers' labour process issues, it lacks the dynamism usually provided by empirical analysis. By this I mean that in order for theoretical discussion to be vigorous and reliable, it needs to confer with and be backed by empirical work. Otherwise, there is not adequate correspondence between theoretical arguments and empirical support.

Thus, this study aims to contribute to the academic discourse in a twofold way: on the one hand, it will endeavour to shed light on and analyse an unexplored research area, namely teachers' labour process in Greece and, on the other, it will provide the empirical analysis which could enrich the theoretical discussion and argumentation as far as teachers' labour process in general is concerned. Enriching the theoretical tools could mean either confirming existing ideas; critically developing them; or challenging them through the introduction, development and elaboration of new factors and parameters in the current body of theory.

### 3. Structure of the thesis.

As outlined above, this is a thesis about teachers' labour process and the focus of the study is teachers' work. The structure of the presentation of the study is as follows:

**Chapter Two:** the aim of this chapter is to discuss conceptual issues concerning teachers' labour process and to develop the theoretical framework within which this study is located. First we set out what teachers' work involves (2.2) and then present the theoretical and conceptual contexts of the thesis.

In particular, we start with the basic assumption within which the study's focus, namely, teachers' labour process, is located. Sections 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 deal with a Marxist account of the labour process in general. Then, we analyse and critically assess Braverman's argument on the labour process (2.6), inscribed within the Marxist tradition, which examines workers' labour process in capitalist societies and has provoked a flood of debate and research. It is developed here because his concept of the separation of the processes of "conception and execution" helps us to conceptualise and study teachers' labour process.

The following section (2.7) has to do with state teachers' class location. This account is followed by a review of issues related to "teaching as a labour process" (2.8). The next section (2.9) bears a close relationship to the previous one and is about the "proletarianisation thesis", a thesis which addresses teachers' labour process and supports Braverman's idea of the separation of "conception from execution". The proletarianisation thesis is discussed in the following three sections in relation to the parameters of: students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge (2.9.1.), teachers' gender (2.9.2.), teachers' specialisation (2.9.3.) and teachers' seniority (2.9.4).

**Chapter Three:** The aim of this chapter is to "implement" the conceptual and theoretical framework developed in the previous chapter in the Greek context. Hence, this chapter refers to teachers' labour process within the Greek educational system. First, a brief introduction (3.1) is given on the current situation and then the education policies of the two parties (3.2, 3.3) which were in power from 1974 to



1999 are described, as far as the system of entrance exams to Higher Education is concerned. Finally, teachers' labour process is presented as this was shaped by the introduction of the prescribed curricula-Desmes (3.4).

**Chapter Four:** Here the research questions of the study, located within the concrete Greek educational context, are posed.

**Chapter Five:** The aim here is to set out the research strategy of this study (5.1). The methodology and the procedures which were followed in order to carry out the empirical work are presented in detail (5.2, 5.3, 5.4).

**Chapter Six:** The presentation of the findings is the subject of this chapter. These are presented in three sections: the first one has to do with working class areas (6.1), the second one with middle/upper class areas (6.2) and the last one (6.3) with School Advisors and Teacher unionists.

**Chapter Seven:** Here the study findings are discussed and interpreted.

**Chapter Eight:** A summary of the findings in relation to the achievements and challenges of this study, as well as suggestions for future research, are offered.

## Chapter 2: The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

### 2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to develop a theoretical and conceptual framework for understanding “teachers’ work”. To this end, before we proceed to theorising teachers’ work, an account will be given of what is meant by the term “work”, as far as teachers are concerned, and this will specify how “work” is used in this study. Then a critical account of the different perspectives on teachers’ work will be presented, in order to develop the theoretical approach within which this study is located. In particular, three very broad main streams of approach to “teachers’ work” will be presented, as well as the reservations which arise from them. These three streams are: the *functionalist* approach, which emphasizes the socialising role of teachers; the *ethnographic* approach, informed by an interactionist perspective and focusing on the lived world of teachers’ professional daily lives; and the “critical” perspectives, one of which is the *Marxist labour process* theory. The latter, under certain circumstances, considers teachers as workers in a labour process which makes them experience restrictions of their autonomy to such a degree that it can be said that they are being proletarianised. It is within the Marxist theoretical framework that this study will address teachers’ labour process and the tendency towards proletarianisation.

We take into consideration the fact that teachers’ work takes place in the setting called “classroom”, which is not an autonomous site, but forms part of a broader educational context called “school”, which, in turn, is part of the broader socio-political context referred to as the “ideological state apparatuses”<sup>3</sup>. Within this framework, we will discuss the relationships developed and the functions performed by those agents, namely, teachers’ work, the school and the state. In particular, it is

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<sup>3</sup> The use here of Althusser’s (1971, p.137) term “Ideological state apparatus” means that we understand and take into consideration the fact that schools operate within specific socio-historical contexts, namely, capitalist societies, and their operation within them is connected to the needs and demands of the reproduction of this particular social order. This reproduction is realised by the educational system (and other institutions, such as the family, religion, the mass media etc) outside production through the use of ideology.

state school teachers' work that will be explored, by focusing on and analysing the structuring of their labour process.

The initial ideas that are developed derive mainly from the Marxist labour process theory which is based on Braverman's thesis about manual workers' labour process under Fordism and his argumentation about the degradation of their work. In particular, emphasis will be given to state teachers' labour process as this is structured by the state's interventions<sup>4</sup> and to issues concerning teachers' class location. Teaching, located within this perspective, is seen as a labour process and teachers as workers who experience control and pressures from the state rendering their work situation problematic. According to the Marxist perspective, this constitutes a process of proletarianisation.

The chapter will proceed to establish the focus of the study by contextualising these issues within the discussion of the "proletarianisation" thesis in the light of four parameters: students' socio-cultural background, teachers' gender, teachers' specialisation and teachers' seniority. This chapter will lay the foundations for the subsequent empirical study.

## **2.2 Teachers' work. Use of the term**

The words "work" and "workplace" traditionally evoke images of places where manual labour using tools to make products occurs. Schools are something different; the popular image of schoolteaching is that of talk-and-chalk by an adult in front of a class of young students. The standard image of teachers' work is one of teachers' presence in a classroom with pupils, teaching a unit, asking questions, making comments, keeping order, marking pupils' writings, advising pupils (Hargreaves, 1994, p.13). All these activities comprise the core of teachers' work in the classroom. However, this is not the only work performed by them in schools. There are also other aspects of work carried out outside the classroom at school or at home. These include such activities as staff meetings, extra-curricular activities, correction of students' writings and preparation for organising the work in the classroom. The

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<sup>4</sup> Other forms of intervention might come, for example, from parents or from local authorities.

imperceptibility of all the activities taking place in the classroom usually renders them almost non-existent in the eyes of the public. When the public judge teachers' work, they usually take into consideration only the stereotypical activity of teaching in the classroom (Hargreaves, 1994, p.14) and their children's achievement.

In studying "teaching" as a form of work, we need, first of all, to locate it within the sphere of the social process of education. The social character of education rests on the fact that it involves sound relationships and joint labour between teachers and students. It is the one thing that remains, as Connell (1995, p. 97) notes, when all other elements change<sup>5</sup>. More specifically, according to Seddon:

teachers are workers engaged in a labour process in classrooms, schools and school systems - their workplaces. Their work involves them, either consciously or unconsciously, in social and political projects which have effects within and well beyond the walls of the classroom and of each individual. (Seddon, 1997, p.702-3)

As Connell indicates, "the state, or other associations, employs teachers, on a wage, to work for specified hours with specified pupils in a specified space. Each of these conditions", he observes, "can be modified and some teachers can work on a temporary basis, on a contract; some work indeterminate hours; some adult literacy teachers never use a classroom" (Connell, 1995, p.96).

Seddon's view of teachers as workers specifies the structural context - objective conditions - within which teachers' work takes place, that is, schools and classrooms and not a context which is shaped by teachers' subjective opinions. As Seddon states, with respect to teachers' careers, it is:

not just a matter of choices that shape the course of the individual's life. It is the consequence, at the individual level, of labour market dynamics, patterns of incentives (salary structure and promotion), institutional orthodoxies, organisational structures and alternative employment opportunities. (Seddon, 1997, p.706)

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<sup>5</sup> The features that can be changed are, for example, the curriculum, the teaching materials and the place of teaching.

However, teaching is not a form of work which only has to do with teachers; teaching also requires work by the learners. "Work" by the learners mainly involves participating in classroom proceedings and preparing homework. Teaching requires coordination and cooperation between teachers and learners (students) to the extent that an educational process has to go on. It is a cliché, as Connell reminds us, that education is a social process and he explains that:

the specific form of the social nature of education, the one thing that remains when other conditions vary, is that education involves the joint labour<sup>6</sup> of teachers and pupils. (Connell, 1995, p.97)

All labour involves some kind of transformation of an object, a transformation from a given state to a new one. A *transformation process* can also be said to be taking place in the teachers' case. To be more specific, their work consists of the transformation of students' capacities so that they become active participants in the world, a transformation which has to do with the transmission and transformation<sup>7</sup> of knowledge, values, attitudes and beliefs about social reality, in order for students to be capable, on leaving school, in Connell's term, of "social practice". This is where "education", as distinct, for example, from training, comes in, and as he stresses:

it can be defined socially as the organized labour whose object is the capacity for social practice. (ibid., p.97)

Because the term "capacity for social practice" is quite abstract and general, we will attempt to outline a classification of kinds of education, mapping simultaneously the teachers' domain of work. By analysing what "capacity for social practice" means, we will demonstrate what we take to be the main components of the social and political framework within which teachers' work occurs, and how this is defined and determined. The model, according to Connell (1995, p.p. 99-100), comprises three types of practice which define the field of teachers' work. These are: the development of students' *capacity to labour*, the process of *socialisation* of students

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<sup>6</sup> "Labour" here signifies the act of working and it should not be confused with the term "labour process".

<sup>7</sup> "Transformation" because we believe students are not passive recipients of teachers' transmitted knowledge.

and the *empowerment* of students with the capacity of critical thinking with a view to transforming the *status quo*.

First, teachers' work involves supplying and developing the students' capacity to offer their labour power when leaving school. To be more specific, *capacity to labour* means "labour power", which students will develop in schools and then sell in the labour market, where it can be bought by capitalists or by the state. The distinction made by Marx between "labour" and "labour power" is an important one in Marx's theory of the capitalist mode of production (Althusser and Balibar, 1970). Labour power is a commodity: it is the capacity to do useful work which adds value to commodities and is to be distinguished from labour, the actual exercise of human productive powers to alter the use value of objects (Dictionary of Marxist Thought, 1983). Unlike labour, labour power can be traded in a market and is the object of exploitation by employers.

The development of the *capacity to work* constitutes the cornerstone of the human capital theory, which is derived from the area of the economics of education. The theory of human capital formation (Schultz, 1961, Becker, 1964) takes educational expenditure to be a form of investment embodied in students as a "capacity to work", which, as a form of "capital" similar to the concept of physical capital embodied in machines and tools, can contribute to a society's economic growth. Students' capacity to work and, consequently, students themselves, according to the human capital theory, are understood as "instruments" for economic growth. Education is conceived exclusively as an "attachment" to the demands of the economy<sup>8</sup>.

However, *capacity to labour* is in itself, as Connell (1995, p.99) argues, a "cultural construct, not a purely technical question." The sense of the term is not given or universally accepted in capitalist societies; on the contrary, it constitutes a "contested terrain." Contested to the extent that it reflects the different interests of various groups, such as employers, the state, teachers' unions and parents, and each of these

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<sup>8</sup> The OECD, UNESCO and other supranational organisations support a human capital conception of schooling. The agenda of educational policy has been largely, in recent decades, dominated by a neoliberal market ideology, emphasising and idolising "performativity". Specifically, the school-effectiveness literature dominates the area of educational policy globally, Conservative or Labour and New Labour governments alike.

might attribute a different sense to the term, depending on their different position in the division of labour. For instance, the employers' perception of the term "capacity to labour" might mean that they are concerned that students be capable of selling their labour power to them at a low price and for the effectivity of their labour power.

A second type of educational practice that can be cited is the one which relates education, and, consequently, teachers' work, to the process of students' *socialisation*. By this we mean that education prepares young people for living in the capitalist society by transmitting those beliefs, ideas, ideals, values and qualifications which are necessary and appropriate to its reproduction.

Following Habermas's<sup>9</sup> distinction between labour and interaction as fundamental types of practice, socialisation can be seen as a category of educational effects which concerns capacities for interaction and communication (Connell, 1995, p.99). This is the approach adopted, for instance, by Giroux (1992) and Wexler (1992), who analyse education as a process operating within the domain of culture and communication. As Giroux (1992, p. 18) states, "*I believe schools are the major institutions for educating students for public life*". Central to this type of educational practice seems to be the contribution of education to the reproduction of the social order through the initiation of students to the dominant patterns of values, attitudes and beliefs. In short, the integration of students into the dominant cultural patterns is of particular significance here.

Thirdly, if we recognize *power* as another broad category of practice, we can, according to Connell (1995, p.100), define another category of educational effects. "Power" here is seen as the practice which will provide students with the capacity of critical and reflective thinking about society so that they become capable of transforming the *status quo*. Education here is seen as playing a potentially emancipatory<sup>10</sup> role with respect to the *status quo*.

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<sup>9</sup> Habermas sees "work" as *purposive-rational* action which realises defined goals under given conditions. By "interaction" he understands *communicative action*. Drawing on his account of the communicative competence of social actors, educational effects can be seen as "capacities for interaction." For a presentation of his argument on the difference between "work" and "interaction", see: Outhwaite, W., *The Habermas Reader*, ch.5, 1996, Oxford, Polity Press.

<sup>10</sup> emancipatory : here it refers to Habermas' theory on the relationship between knowledge and interest. Habermas develops a typology of sciences according to their driven interest. He categorizes

An educational system may focus on more than one of these types of capacity; whether this is made officially explicit is another matter. The existence of three types of “capacities for social practice” may not always be easily discernible in every educational context. In capitalist societies educational systems seem to be promoting mainly the first and second type of practice, since what is mostly needed in capitalist production is the reproduction of itself, its existing hierarchies and divisions and not a critical and reflective thinking which might undermine its presence. Hence promoting the third type of practice, namely “power” would be inconsistent with the needs of capitalist

However, it has to be noted here that the reproduction of the existing social order can never be fully successful. Cases where the educational system produces capacities for empowerment may also be possible. This means that teachers’ work in the classroom should be seen as mainly contributing to and promoting the above two practices. But the promotion of these practices is neither a straightforward nor a pre-ordained procedure. It is based, instead, upon a contested process of struggles between competing interests and priorities.

To summarise, in this study the term teachers’ “work” refers to the process of transformation of students’ capacities, in order for students to be capable, on leaving school, of social practice. This is achieved through the processes of transmitting and transforming knowledge, values and beliefs, which take place in the work-site called the “classroom”. Classrooms here are seen as settings which are not independent from the context of school and the function this performs in its role as a state apparatus in capitalist societies. Within this context, teachers’ work in the classroom could be seen as mainly fulfilling the above two practices, namely, “capacity to labour” and “socialization” to the dominant culture.

The third type of practice, that is, the “capacity to power”, in short, the emancipatory role of education, should be seen as *the* great demand of the social struggles of our times. I call it *the* great demand because in the globalisation era, as this is, when

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them into three groups: the empirical-analytical one, whose point of departure is a technical interest, the historical-interpretive one, driven by a practical interest, and the critical one, driven by an



schools operate in an atmosphere of marketisation and competition with each other for public support, resources and students, the key issue is related to the purposes for which schools exist as annexes of industry rather than as autonomous educational sites where the young can develop their critical abilities, a necessary condition to question society (Smyth, 2000, p.15). It is the *primary* demand because in times of a globalised economy the main aim and role of education is the “production” of a flexible labour power, and anything that might hinder or undermine this function is overlooked.

It is exactly the above-discussed third type of practice of education which this study will attempt to approach through the exploration of teachers’ labour process.

### 2.3 Studying Teachers’ Work

The aim of this section is to review the body of literature which has been developed on teachers’ work in the last four decades, discuss the strengths and weaknesses which appear in models of understanding teachers’ work and propose a broad theoretical model within which teachers’ work can be conceived of for the purposes of this study.

There is an extensive body of literature on “teachers’ work”. Taking into account the focus of this study, which is teachers’ work in the classroom, we can identify and present three main types of approach. These, as we mentioned in the introduction, are: Functionalist approaches, Ethnographic approaches, informed by an interactionist perspective, and Critical<sup>11</sup> approaches. Perspectives within the latter category comprise feminist studies in education, the postmodernist perspective to education, and the labour process theory, inspired by a Marxist perspective, which will be the theoretical context within which this study will operate. In more detail, the above three perspectives can be presented as follows.

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emancipatory interest (Kouzelis, 1996, p.27. In the same text of Habermas’s on “Knowledge and Interest”, p.p. 351- 369).

<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, under the category of “critical” can be located perspectives which mainly develop a “critical” stance to those studies which conceive of and approach teachers’ work as quite homogeneous and autonomous, which means that the requirements and needs of the capitalist system are not taken into consideration. Feminist studies are an example of the homogeneous conception, and the Marxist perspective, the labour process theory, of the autonomous one.

The functionalist approach was mainly dominant in American sociology of the 1950s and 1960s. Teaching as work was analysed in relation to its contribution to stability and persistence and those features which were considered questionable were seen as potentially “dysfunctional”.

The three most classic studies in the early 1970s, the *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Travers, 1973), *The School as a Workplace* by Robert Dreeben and *Observations on Teaching as Work* by Dan Lortie, demonstrated the influence of the functionalist approach. Dreeben (1973) argues that authority relations in schools and education systems, together with the spatial arrangements of classrooms as work-sites, define the character of teachers’ work (Acker, 1995/96, p. 103). Lortie (1973) also considers the structure of schools to be responsible for determining and shaping teaching. Within this perspective, occupations were assessed against an ideal-typical professional standard that included assumptions to a specialised knowledge base, service to society, long formal preparation and autonomous control over work processes (Acker, 1995/96, p.103).

The functionalist perspective on teaching seems to connect teachers’ work to the demands of schools and school systems without developing any further questions in relation to the demands of the broader socio-economic context within which the school systems operate, namely, the capitalist one. The functionalist model seems to approach school systems as self-contained and self-regulated systems within which teaching takes place. To the degree, as noted above, that this perspective does not take into account the capitalist character of society, it fails to see teaching as work performed within a social context with variations such as the students’ socio-economic background and their dispositions towards knowledge.

A second perspective which developed from the late 1960s onwards was the ethnographic one. Since the 1960s, observations of schools and classrooms informed by an interactionist perspective have revealed the complex relationships and interaction between teachers and students, as well as the teachers’ part in the active construction of social life in schools (Hughes, 1958).

These observations emphasise the following points: (a) the meaning things have for people is central to human action; (b) the attribution of meaning is a continuous process of understanding and acting, not a one-off consequence of individual psychology or social structure; and (c) this process is social and localised, being based on specific contexts of interaction (Seddon, 1997, p.703). Ethnographic works have shown teachers' involvement in conflicting realms of interaction and the way in which their strategies have obstructed equality of opportunity (Sharp & Green, 1975). Such approaches, as Seddon (1997, p. 704) maintains, "have challenged postwar functionalist approaches to education as a means of socialisation in a consensual society, and teachers' roles as functionaries playing coherent teachers' roles".

In the 1970s and 1980s the interactionist perspective in education research flourished mainly within British sociology of education: Hargreaves, D., 1972; Lortie, 1975; Lacey, 1977; Woods, 1979, 1983; Burgess, 1983; Denscombe, 1985; Pollard, 1985; Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985; Ball, 1987; Nias, 1989; Nias, Southworth & Yeomans, 1989; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Hargreaves, A. & Woods, 1984; Woods, 1980, 1990; Acker, 1989, 1990a, 1990b; Goodson & Walker, 1991; Goodson, I., 1992; Hargreaves, A., 1994; Woods, 1997.

During the 1990s, the works of Acker (1994, 1999) emphasised an analysis of gender. Also, among ethnographic studies which enriched our knowledge of teachers' work are those located within a broadly symbolic interactionist tradition. These studies developed concepts such as teacher *selves*, *identities* (Goodson, 1991), *cultures* (Lacey, 1977, Woods, 1979, Hargreaves, 1994), *professional lives* (Ball & Goodson, 1985, Acker, 1999), *careers* (Lortie, 1975, Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985) and *coping strategies* (Woods, 1997).

The main criticism of the symbolic interactionist perspective is that it focuses on the micro-context of teachers' work, the classroom, while neglecting issues such as power and political, social and economic contexts of teachers' work, namely, the macro-context. By focusing on micro-contexts, the ethnographic perspective fails to grasp and theorise the broader social context within which teachers' work takes place.

Even in works where there is a notion of conflict developed, this does not transcend the framework of school, failing to conceptualise broader social structures outside the classroom and the school setting. This is the case of Hargreaves's (1994) account of "balkanized" teacher sub-cultures in secondary schools which are seen as an example of conflicting and competing interests within the school. As, for example, Hargreaves (1994, p. 215) characteristically argues,

"promotion, status and resources are frequently distributed between and realised through membership of teacher sub-cultures... teachers of older students tend to receive more status and rewards than teachers of younger ones; teachers of some subjects more than teachers of others. In balkanized cultures, there are winners and losers".

However, Hargreaves does not explain why there are winners and losers and what the criteria which make some groups winners and others losers are. In short, he does not take into account the broader socio-political context outside school which affects and shapes the specific pattern of sub-cultures.

Grounding their broader epistemological orientation on phenomenology (Husserl, 1931, Schutz, 1962), approaches of ethnographic and interactionist<sup>12</sup> origin, by focusing on the micro-level of social reality, seem to reduce the level of social totality to the level of social reality which can be observed. The phenomenal world of everyday life as presented by ethnography seems to be approached as static and ahistorical; static to the extent that conflicts and struggles between groups are not taken into consideration (Sharp & Green, 1975, p.5), and ahistorical because it fails to conceive of the phenomenal social reality as a particular moment in the overall historical process and does not focus on the broader macro structures, such as the role of the state, which give shape to the phenomenal everyday world.

Thus, what seems to be the weakness of ethnographic studies is their neglect of the political character of the phenomena which they attempt to study. People's actions

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<sup>12</sup> Ethnography is seen by some writers as a by-product of symbolic interactionism. See B.N. Meltzer et al, *Symbolic Interactionism: Genesis, Varieties and Criticism* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977, p. 75, cited in Lampiri-Dimaki, I., 1990, *Sociology and its methodology* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) Sakkoulas, Komotini (in Greek).

and beliefs are not shaped exclusively by themselves *in vitro*; they are the result of contexts of wider struggles, in short, of politics.

All this does not mean that the approach and studies of the above scholars are not useful to some extent in understanding teachers' labour process; it simply means that they are insufficient in themselves. A descriptive approach of teachers' everyday professional life, no matter how elaborated and well-presented it is, still fails to grasp and analyse the broader social context within which the work is realised. What this study seeks to argue is that individuals' perceptions and interpretations of social reality, in order to be understood and analysed, should be developed in the context of an understanding of social structures within which these perceptions operate. People's actions should be located and studied within a framework of constraints and limitations, irrespective of whether these are perceived as such by people or not.

Any notion of people's subjective perceptions and meanings should be conceptualised within a theoretical framework which takes into account the structural constraints and limitations within which the concrete behaviour and perceptions are shaped. As Sharp and Green argue:

In the same way that Marx was against starting his analyses of society and history at the level of consciousness, but rather sought for the societal structures which regulate interindividual action, so we need to develop some conceptualisation of the situations that individuals find themselves in, in terms of the structure of opportunities the situations make available to them and the kinds of constraints they impose. (Sharp & Green, 1975, p.22)

When considering teachers' work as this is approached by classroom interaction studies, there is no conceptualisation or theorisation of the broader socio-historical and political conditions under which the particular perceptions are shaped. However, classrooms as work-sites might be affected and, to a great extent, shaped by macro-structures such as the broader social, political and economic context. Classroom proceedings do not take place in a social vacuum, as classroom walls do not insulate classrooms from the broader social context. Conversely, they are penetrated by external social structures and affected by them, while classrooms might in turn be seen as affecting the external social context. An example of the latter case is the

“critical pedagogy” which might be developed in the context of the classroom and can contribute to a transformation of social structures<sup>13</sup>.

As mentioned above, “the critical” approach to teachers’ work comprises feminist studies, postmodern perspectives on education and the labour process theory inspired by a Marxist approach. During the 1990s, an extensive body of historical studies was developed, focusing on the experiences of women teachers in various contexts (Markowitz, 1993; Prentice & Theobald, 1991, cited in Acker, 1999, p.25). The main criticism which feminist studies faced had to do with the neglect of men as teachers and with the fact that women as teachers do not constitute a homogeneous group. There are differences related to class, race, ethnicity, marital status, age (Acker, 1995/96 p.115).

During the latter part of the 1980s, new theoretical perspectives emerged to explore questions which were untapped by other critical traditions. These are “postmodernism” and “post-structuralism”. These new traditions in education challenged the “critical modernist” tradition, the modernist concern which considers society a historical totality mediated by social antagonisms of power, domination and emancipatory potential (Popkewitz, 1999, p.3).

Within the “critical” perspective can also be located the postmodernist approach to education and teachers’ work. This is because it criticises a specific approach to education which is associated with the ideals and the discourse of the Enlightenment. A central feature of postmodernism has been its attack on Enlightenment notions of totality, reason and universality. Instead, postmodernism propounds a pluralistic understanding of truth. As far as education and teachers’ work are concerned, in line with the decline of grand narratives, “educational institutions are becoming more functional<sup>14</sup> and the emphasis is on skills, rather than on ideals” (Sarup, 1993, p.138, cited in Usher, 1994, p.176). The task of education is to operate in the most efficient

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<sup>13</sup> For example, the work of Giroux, H., 1988, 1992a, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> Functional here means effective and in correspondence with the economy and its demands.

way to provide individuals with the knowledge which is required in order to contribute to the improvement of the social system (Usher, 1994, p.175).<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, by placing too much emphasis on the classroom context, the postmodernist perspective and its functionalist dimension to education fail to consider the broader social context within which teachers' work and education are inscribed.

Foucault can be considered the most prominent thinker within the "post-structuralist" perspective. His theory (1969) on power has a central position within his overall theoretical production. Foucault, heavily inspired by Nietzsche, is concerned with the idea of how people control themselves and others through the production of knowledge. He sees knowledge as, according to Ritzer (1996, p.599), *generating power by constituting people as subjects and then governing the subjects with knowledge*. In short, he argues for knowledge as a disciplining force of individuals in their everyday life. He focuses on knowledge and its relation to power, a Nietzschean perspective which sees the will for truth as a will for power. For him there is no truth, only interpretations of reality (Merquior, 2002, p.172). His concepts of discipline and surveillance are not only key aspects of prisons, but also pervade other organisations such as the school (Giddens, 1982, p.220). Hence, his perspective on organisations such as the school, which operate by discipline and surveillance, helps us to see the nature of the organisational context within which teachers work. More specifically, Foucault's concept of discipline as control of peoples' activities is the main principle which characterises the school reality. In schools teachers' and students' activities and behaviour are subject to daily control by the educational authorities. For example, head teachers control teachers and students, and students are also controlled by teachers.

The Marxist perspective to teachers' work, namely, the labour process theory, which is adopted in this study, is located within the third approach to teachers' work. We locate our study within the Marxist perspective because this takes seriously into

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<sup>15</sup> See also: Lyotard, J., 1984, *The Postmodern Condition*, for a discussion of the role of knowledge/education in the postmodern context.

consideration the broader social context within which teachers' work takes place, not in its general form, but as a capitalist one. Thus, teachers are viewed as workers and the tendencies towards proletarianisation are explored (Acker, 1995/6, p.107). What distinguishes this from the other two approaches is that it focuses on the broader socio-historical context within which teachers' work takes place, namely, the capitalistic one. This perspective is reflected in the works of Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; White, 1983; Apple, 1986; Lawn & Ozga, 1988; Carlson, 1992; Watkins, 1992; Smyth, 2000.

The general argument which dominates this research perspective stems from Braverman's theory (1974) which claims that the imperative of accumulation in capitalism has been responsible for the continual restructuring of jobs, whether blue or white collar, so as to separate the principle of conception from that of execution (Tipton, 1985, p.48). This process is called "deskilling". Apple (1986, 1992) develops a version of this approach in which he argues that the reality of many teachers' daily lives in classrooms is becoming controlled and subject to administrative control. As he argues:

The integration together of management systems, reductive behaviorally-based curricula, pre-specified teaching "competencies" and procedures and student responses, and pre- and post- testing, was leading to a loss of control and a separation of conception from execution (Apple, 1986, p.32).

Thus, all the above replace the skills that teachers have traditionally used in their tasks.

This approach to teachers' work takes capitalism as its main concern. Capitalism is conceptualised as a structural framework within which teachers' work is carried out. Specifically, the imperative for accumulation of capital is considered as the driving force of the restructuring of teachers' work. In short, the focus is solely on factors of economic production that could determine and shape teachers' work. There is no argumentation on other factors such as the political ones and, more specifically, the state which plays a role of integrating the unity of a social formation; this total role is a political one (Poulantzas, 1968, p. 65).



Within this perspective, the focus is on the macro societal structures of capitalism and the constraints and limitations which these have on teachers' work. However, by focusing exclusively on capitalism and, more specifically, on its economic demands - the law of accumulation -, economy becomes the instrument for analysing every social phenomenon and the whole society is reduced to the laws of economy. Yet society is not only economy; even in cases where economy plays a decisive role in accounting for a social phenomenon, there are also political institutions, such as the state, which intervene and shape a social order. Therefore, by overemphasising the structural limitations caused by the capitalistic imperative of accumulation, this form of the "critical" perspective leaves no room for possible resistances and struggles by the social subjects.

The underlying assumption here is that structures seem to be playing a highly restrictive role in people's lives and, in our case, in teachers' professional lives, so people are not able to intervene and resist the structural pressures. While this is not unreasonable to argue, this approach fails to conceive and conceptualise human agency. This criticism does not in any case imply that human agency can always make the difference, but simply that social reality is much more complex and that it is simplistic to reduce it to the needs of economy. Although we do argue that economy plays an important role in shaping social reality, we should not see it as autonomous, but in relation to the role of human agency, of class struggles. To be more specific, for example, the law of the accumulation of capital is the driving force of capitalism, but the way it will be shaped has to do with the historical specificities of class struggles as well. The above approach seems to disregard the role class struggles can play in transforming the existent structures and intervening in capitalist societies. It presents us with the image of societies without a social dynamic or struggles for overcoming the restrictive role of structures.

This summary presentation of the three research approaches to teachers' work points to the fact that they all share weaknesses which render them problematic in studying teachers' work. The functionalist approach does not take into account the capitalist character of society. The ethnographic one focuses on teachers' work which takes place in classrooms and overlooks the social-political context affecting it. The labour

process theory focuses exclusively on the demands, the needs and imperatives of capitalist economy which affect education.

Consequently, what is suggested here is an approach to teachers' work which will take seriously into consideration two aspects: firstly, the structural context within which teaching as work takes place, namely, the classroom, which is not conceptualised as an abstract and autonomous setting but as an ideological state apparatus, and, secondly, teachers' perceptions and interpretations of their daily teaching work.

## **2.4 Teachers' Work, the School and the State**

Having suggested above that classrooms should be seen as part of a broader social context such as the school, in this section we will examine the role schooling plays in capitalist societies, as an Ideological State apparatus, thus locating teachers' work within the context of the capitalist state<sup>16</sup>. In particular, the role schooling plays in capitalist societies will be identified through developing a model and a perspective which owes much to two main theoretical approaches to schooling: the reproduction theory, which is functional as far as the demands of capitalism are concerned, and the resistance theory<sup>17</sup>. The reason for presenting these two theoretical approaches has to do with the way education is conceptualised and contextualised within those two perspectives. More specifically, education is located, grasped and understood as a state apparatus operating within a concrete model of societies, namely, the capitalist ones, and contributing to the reproduction of the dominant social order in a functional way.

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<sup>16</sup> State: when we refer to "state" in this study we mean the State apparatus which includes the Government, the Administration, the Army, Courts etc. All these constitute what Althusser (1971, pp. 136, 137) calls the Repressive State Apparatus. Repressive means that the apparatus "functions by violence", at least ultimately, since repression, e.g. administrative repression, may take non-physical forms, while the Ideological state apparatuses, such as the school, the family, religious ISA, legal ISA and communications function by ideology.

<sup>17</sup> Other contemporary theoretical perspectives on the state and education (Torres, 1995/6) include: Other contemporary theoretical perspectives on the state and education (Torres, 1995/6) include: the liberal-pluralist theories which see the state as an autonomous political institution independent from the system of production and class structure. Educational systems are seen as performing the functions of cognitive and moral socialisation, skills training and certification. Another perspective is the neoconservative one, which was associated with drastic shifts away from the welfare state in the 1980s, including Thatcher's and Reagan's governmental policies. The neoconservative state's

Formal education - mainly in elementary and secondary level - is primarily a public service provided by the state in contemporary social formations. This means that schools are structured to a significant extent by being state institutions.

Two streams of approach within the theoretical perspective of reproduction theory can be identified: the functionalist one and the neo-Marxist one. Talcott Parsons was one of the most influential functionalist authors. For him education satisfies two functions: *socialisation*, which can be seen as a process of transmission of values for maintaining the social order and stability, and *selection* of students, which has to do with their allocation to roles within society. However, the major function for him is socialisation, without which social order and harmony are impossible (Blackledge, 1985, p. 67). According to the second approach, which has influenced the way educators view teachers and teaching, educational institutions are considered as significant reproducers of the dominant social order. This approach is grounded on a neo-Marxist structural model. It is associated in Europe with the work of the French structuralists, such as Louis Althusser and Nicos Poulantzas, and in the U.S.A with the work of Bowles and Gintis<sup>18</sup>, as well as that of Harry Braverman, although his work does not directly refer to schooling but has influenced scholars who developed the labour process theory concerning education.

According to Althusser, schools are part of the “ideological state apparatuses”, contributing first to the reproduction of skills and second to the reproduction of the relations of production. In short, schools seem to play a functional role in the reproduction of capitalist society.

The reproduction of the skills and rules of labour power is defined within the context of the formal curriculum (Giroux, 1983, p.263).

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function in education has mainly to do with the introduction of standardised curricula which lead to restrictions of teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process

<sup>18</sup> Althusser, L. (1971) 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, London, New Left Books; Poulantzas, N. (1975) *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London, New Left Books; Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul; Braverman, H. (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, London, Monthly Review Press. Braverman's theory of capitalist labour process has inspired scholars in the field of education, who “transferred” a theory of labour process in education. Ibid.

In Althusser's terminology, this includes the "know-how" students need in order to:

read, to write, and to add - i.e., a number of techniques, and a number of other things as well, including elements of "scientific" or "literary culture", which are directly useful in the different jobs in production...Children also learn the rules of good behaviour, i.e., the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is "destined" for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination (Althusser, 1971, p.127).

In order to maintain the general conditions for capital accumulation, the state promotes social welfare. Thus schools, like other state institutions, should be viewed in the context of pressures and social processes involving the crisis in capital accumulation. In times of crisis in capital accumulation processes and, consequently, of crisis of the welfare state, the role of the class struggle in maintaining and protecting social rights such as education is crucial.

Bowles and Gintis developed what they call the *correspondence* theory, i.e., correspondence between education and economy and, more specifically, between daily classroom encounters and workplace relations (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Broadly speaking, they see a close correspondence between the social relations of education and those of work. The correspondence theory argues that the values and skills that characterise the workplace can also be found in the classroom setting. Through the classroom social relations, schooling inculcates in students the necessary dispositions to accept the economic order of a capitalist economy. These authors have summarised their specific proposition as follows:

Education prepares students to be workers through a *correspondence* between the social relations of production and the social relations of education. Like the division of labour in the capitalist enterprise, the educational system is a finely graded hierarchy of authority and control in which competition rather than cooperation governs the relations among participants, and an external reward system -wages in the case of the economy and grades in the case of schools- holds sway (Bowles & Gintis, 1981, p.p.46-47).

What reproduction theorists share is an understanding of the special role of the state in social and economic reproduction, a functional view of the school as an apparatus of the state and a reductionist (to the needs and demands of the capitalist system) treatment of teachers as the agents or functionaries of schooling (Carlson, 1988, p. 159). In short, the reproduction perspective of education has overemphasised the idea of the existence of structural modes of domination, at the expense of the role of human agency. We criticise this by arguing that it "overemphasised" the structural modes of domination, and that it did not **also** take into consideration the role of human agency in the reproduction of social order. This perspective laid all the emphasis on the structures and failed to conceptualise and theorise the notion of human agency, such as, for example, teachers and students (Giroux, 1983, p. 259).

When we criticise the reproduction theory for neglecting human agency, we do not in any case mean that it ignored "one" factor. It is not an issue of addition, two instead of one. What is at stake here is the way in which structure is approached. It is conceived as an autonomous entity which can shape an education context. Yet structures, as modes of restriction, have to do with social subjects and they structure or shape and effect the way social subjects act and react to those restrictions. Thus, structures should be conceived as mediated and shaped by human agency in an ongoing relationship. Alternatively, structures could be seen as social contexts where human agents find themselves, making available to them a set of opportunities as well as constraints which operate below the level of surface appearances.

Located within the perspective of the reproduction theory, teachers' practices are seen as part of the reproduction of the social relations of production. It is clear that the reproductive approach to schooling leaves no room for any form of resistance against the demands of capitalist order, either from teachers or from students. It is rather assumed that obedience, discipline and subordination to the needs and demands of capitalism apply to both.

As a reaction, largely to the determinism of reproductive accounts of schooling which implied that schools could not make a difference to the reproduction of the oppressive aspects of the social class relations of capitalism, a resistance theory of schooling developed which emphasised the relative autonomy between the demands

and needs of capitalism and those of education. This stresses the role of schools as places of contradiction and the importance of human agency for analysing the relationship between schools and society. Resistance theorists argue that:

schools are relatively autonomous institutions that not only provide spaces for oppositional behaviour and teaching but also represent a source of contradictions that sometimes make them dysfunctional to the material and ideological interests of the dominant society (Giroux, 1983, p.260).

Inspired by the resistance theory, an effort was made by Willis (1977) - *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* - to show that human agency (students) do resist the dominant patterns of values. In particular, Willis studied the cultural relations of working class males in an inner-city English school. He argued that the "lads" resisted the dominant values of society by resisting the form of education offered by school. As he notes: "there is an undoubted sense in which working class values and feelings - importantly though not always borne by parents - work against the school" (Willis, 1977, p.73). Ironically enough, however, the resistance they developed contributed to the reproduction of relations of oppression. Their resistance to the dominant values fails to contribute to the transformation of the relations of production and, ultimately, their anti-school culture guides them to the shop floor. In general, their anti-school culture facilitates the reproduction of the capitalist system. For Willis this reproduction does not take place without struggles, as he maintains:

..social agents are not passive bearers of ideology, but active appropriators who reproduce existing structures only through struggle (Willis, 1977, p.175).

As Walker (1985, 1986) argues, although Willis wanted to contest the determinism of Althusserian Marxism, in the end his work points to another structural determinism, which in the "lads" case was their culture located within the specific social-historical context. In Willis's case, we argue that the term "resistance" can easily be adopted for the social context of the school system, where "lads" resist the dominant school values and culture, but can hardly be accepted in the case of the broader social system which is systematically reproduced.

A major problem concerning the theory of resistance has to do with what is defined as "resistance". If the term is not clearly defined, then it might be the case that any form of non-conformism to the dominant patterns of behaviour - whether by teachers or students - could be seen as resistance to the dominant order. In short, a case of struggle can be characterised as "resistance" when it plays an undermining role for the reproduction of the capitalist social order. All this does not, in any case, mean that the resistance theory is of no theoretical value or usefulness in understanding the role of school in capitalist societies. By "theoretical value", we mean that the resistance theory successfully problematised the "human agency" factor and initiated the theoretical discussion and development of the concept of "resistance".

In particular, the emphasis of the resistance theory on the role of human agency in structural contexts, as the theoretical cornerstone for analysing the relationship between school and society, led us to see the relationship between classroom proceedings and the broader social structures as mediated by human agents. In other words, it is exactly the emphasis on human agency - teachers and students - which gave us a major insight in the study of teachers' labour process. By "insight" we mean that the resistance theory contributed to our perceiving, in this study, the structures which restrict teachers' autonomy as mediated by human agency and not as operating autonomously. The human agents (teachers and students) come together within specific social-historical settings (the classrooms) in order, as developed above, for teachers to make students *capable for social practices*. Within this structural context, teachers and students develop a set of relations which need to be studied if we are to understand the role of human agency within the specific educational context.

Another problem concerning the resistance theory is that it fails to capture the variations in the responses to schooling which result from the intersection of teacher and student perceptions, expectations and interpretations, as these are mediated by a variety of modes, such as gender, class and ethnicity (McFadden, 1995, p.297). The resistance theory, in its attempt to criticise the theory of reproduction, tends to overlook the fact that schooling is located within the social context of capitalist societies which are mediated by social inequalities concerning class, gender, race and

ethnicity. Thus, the resistance theory does not focus on human agency as homogeneous, but sees it as mediated by social inequalities.

Therefore, when studying possible forms of resistance to the educational structural context, students and teachers should not be considered as homogeneous groups. For example, students come from different socio-economic strata and carry different socio-cultural backgrounds, while teachers also share differences, for instance, as far as the issue of gender is concerned.

In considering teachers' work, classroom operations should not be seen as autonomous entities, independent of the broader demands and the social context within which they are inscribed and operate, the way they are seen by resistance theory. For example, in times of recession, when public expenditure of the welfare state has to be rationalised, it is hardly possible<sup>19</sup> for teachers' work to be immune from state pressures and controls in order to follow and serve the general demands (Harris, 1994).

We argue that what needs to be considered are the social factors which operate within classrooms as work-sites and might facilitate possible forms of resistance to state controls and pressures. In other words, in order to challenge the mechanistic way in which the reproductive theory approaches the relationship between the economy and schooling, our analysis has to focus not only on the structural context but also on the human agency, within the internal workings of the school -the classroom- in specific social and historical contexts.

By developing a structural framework within which schooling operates in capitalist societies, the reproductive theory of schooling fails to take into consideration human agency, thus reducing human beings - teachers and students - to mere "puppets" in the hands of external interests. The resistance theory, respectively, by emphasising human agency, fails to grasp the structural framework within which teachers and students operate. Focusing on human agents may conceal the underlying structural

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<sup>19</sup> Here we are not suggesting that in times of economic development the school is immune to pressures and controls; what we argue is that when the need for rationalisation of social expenditure is less compelling to the demands of capital, then controls and pressures on teachers' work might be less rigid.



determinations of opportunities. What is suggested here is that emphasis should be given to the relationship between structure and human agency as this is realised in concrete educational settings and social-historical contexts.

One of the most effectively articulated efforts to deal with the relationship between structure and agency and to integrate agency and structure is Anthony Giddens's structuration theory. As he argues, "*the basic domain of the study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across time and space*" (Giddens, 1984, p.2). The above leads us to what Giddens, in the development of structuration theory, refers to as the *duality of structure*. As he maintains:

the constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality...are both the medium and the outcome of the practices they recursively organize...structures are both enabling and constraining (Giddens, 1984, p.25).

As Rachlin (1991, cited in Ritzer, 1996, p.531) notes, structuration involves the dialectical relationship between structure and agency. Structures and agents constitute a duality and neither structures nor agents can exist without one another. Thus structures should not be seen *a priori* as only restrictive to human action, and human agency should not be assumed *a fortiori* as omnipotent in relation to the restrictions of structures. Both need to be studied simultaneously within the concrete context of their operation, to be studied as a mutually constitutive relationship and not separately.

It can be said that there is a Marxian influence on Giddens's work, since he sees *The Constitution of Society* as an extended reflection upon Marx's phrase: *Men [let us immediately say human beings] make history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing* (Giddens, 1984, p.xxi). The role of human agency in social history can be

traced in Marxism in the work of Marx and Engels<sup>20</sup>, where the central theme is the class struggle. More specifically, at the beginning of their work they state that:

The history of hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle...

Moreover, in the same direction, as far as the role of human agency is concerned, Castoriadis notes that the restrictive character of structures (economic) cannot be conceived and understood outside the role of human agency in capitalist societies. More specifically, he argues:

the economic “laws” developed by Marx make no sense outside the class struggle, they do not have any specific content: the “law of value” does not have any given sense when we want to apply it to the fundamental commodity, the labour power; it is an empty form, which takes its meaning from the struggle between workers and employers (Castoriadis, 1981, p.50).

Thus, structures, we argue, should not be disconnected from the human agents who are subject to them; they should be considered as constituting a duality. The concept of the *duality of structure*<sup>21</sup> may be seen as enriching the critical approach to the labour process which, as discussed above, focuses exclusively on the structural limitations caused by the capitalist imperatives of accumulation and omits human agents, namely, the social subjects of teachers and students, who make their own history under circumstances not chosen by them.

Taking these theoretical considerations into account, we now turn to the development of the theoretical perspective which is adopted here for studying teachers’ work.

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<sup>20</sup> Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, p. 25 (in Greek).

<sup>21</sup> The concept of the *duality of structure* will be discussed with respect to the concepts of the labour process theory below, in section 2.8, “Teaching as a labour process”.

## 2.5 Towards a Labour Process Theory of Teachers' Work

As discussed above, in section 2.4, teachers' work in the classroom can be approached and studied from mainly three perspectives, the functionalist, the ethnographic and the "critical"-Marxist one, which is known as the labour process theory. This study will approach teachers' work through the perspective of the labour process theory. In our view, the labour process theory offers us a powerful lens through which to understand teachers' work. The structuration theory will be articulated with this, to provide us with a theoretical tool in approaching and analysing the relationship between structural constraints on teachers' work and teachers as human agents who work within those structural limitations.

The reasons for adopting the labour process theory in this study of teachers' work has to do with the way teachers' work is defined and contextualised here. The labour process theory, by approaching "work" in capitalist social formations as a labour process<sup>22</sup> which needs to be controlled by the capital, provides us with an appropriate conceptual matrix within which teachers' work, as this is organised in the classroom, can be located, grasped and understood. Our focus on the way teachers' work is performed in the classroom is contextualised within the capitalist state, where the concept of "control" of education and teachers' work is of central importance for the reproduction of the dominant social order.

Teachers' work has to be supervised and controlled, since the school has to "produce" concrete outcomes - like products for the market in the case of commodity production - or, as developed above according to Connell's notion, "capacities for social practice." In other words, "control" is a vital part of teachers' work. Control is exercised either by teachers on students as part of their work (discipline and surveillance) or by the state on teachers (control of their labour process).

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<sup>22</sup> According to the Dictionary of Marxist thought the term "labour process" means: *"At its simplest, labour process is the process whereby labour is materialised or objectified in USE VALUES. Labour is here an interaction between the person who works and the natural world such that elements of the latter are consciously altered in a purposive manner"* (Dictionary of Marxist Thought, 1983, p.267). For a detailed discussion on what the term "labour process" signifies, see section 2.8.

In ethnographic studies the “control”<sup>23</sup> exercised by the state, as a structure, is not conceptualised and problematised, in short, it does not become the focus of analysis. “Control” remains a descriptive rather than an analytical category in these kinds of studies and, as a result, they are unable to grasp and locate teachers’ work within the specific socio-historical context. By this we mean that “control” is not adequately theorised or contextualised. The issue here is not the description of teachers’ work, but the illumination of the social context within which this is realised, as well as the determination of the political/economic factors which give birth to specific forms of control over teachers’ work.

As discussed above, ethnographic studies inspired by an interactionist perspective focus on the observable aspects of teachers’ daily school lives, thus failing to capture the underlying structure of teachers’ work patterns. Teachers’ work in the classroom seems to be conceptualised and understood by these kinds of studies as a set of activities merely taking place in the narrow context of the classroom, without any further discussion of the broader socio-economic context within which classrooms operate.

Although teachers’ work does take place in the narrow setting of the classroom, there are also external social structures, such as the state, which creep into the classroom and shape teachers’ work perceptions. For example, a prescribed and standardised curriculum shapes a structural context of limitations which, in turn, shapes teachers’ perceptions and work experiences. Thus, because the ethnographic perspective fails to connect the classroom’s internal workings to wider social structures, teachers’ work seems to take place in an isolated setting, immune from the context of state interventions. The ethnographic approach tends to see teachers’ daily lives in schools as developing in an autonomous terrain, rather than in a place which constitutes a vital part of a wider social and historical context which might affect the working proceedings of the classroom.

On the contrary, as we discussed above, the key element within the labour process perspective is that teachers’ work is located and approached within a specific social

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<sup>23</sup> In this study, ‘control’ is used as developed by Edwards for the workers’ case: the ability of the

context, that of the capitalist state, and is not independent of it. Teachers' work is contextualised within the broader social context of capitalism and the demands this dictates. In short, there is an exclusive emphasis on the structural limitations posed by capitalist demands on teachers' work and, consequently, structure tends to be conceived as *a priori* restrictive and human agency as a non-existent factor.

The labour process theory, we argue, may help us to grasp and understand the way teachers' work is organised in capitalist societies, but it, nevertheless, seems to have a weak point which renders it vulnerable to criticism: it fails to take into account human agency and the possibility of resistances. This is, we argue, a fair criticism, in that the labour process theory in education seems to emphasise control as posing structural constraints and limitations upon teachers' work, due to the need of the capitalist state to rationalise working processes. It is argued, for example, by Apple and Jungck, that:

...the daily lives of teachers in classrooms of many nations are becoming ever more controlled and ever more subject to administrative logics that seek to tighten the reins on the processes of teaching and curriculum (Apple & Jungck, 1992, p.20).

Although this argument, we argue, might be true in general, it nevertheless seems to focus exclusively on the concrete structural constraints imposed on teachers' daily lives in a deterministic way which undermines the role teachers themselves play in shaping their daily lives. Possible variations in the way teachers perceive and make sense of the control exercised on their work do not seem to be taken into consideration. By referring to variations in teachers' understanding of pressures and controls, we do not mean that these can automatically be considered as resistances. If the pressures and controls of the state are to be understood, they should be contextualised and approached within concrete social and historical contexts, otherwise there is a danger of the term "control" becoming an omnipresent -a *passé partout*- category with no reference to or grounding, in this case, on the specific social conditions of teachers' work. In other words, we need to locate "control" within two social frameworks: a general one, such as, for example, a particular form

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state to obtain desired work behaviour from teachers (Edwards, 1979, p.17).

of “capitalism”, and a specific, concrete one, such as teachers’ work within a specific educational site, the classroom.

The labour process theory (as exhibited in the works of Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; White, 1983; Apple, 1986; Lawn & Ozga, 1988; Carlson, 1992; Watkins, 1992) does not seem to take into consideration features which have to do with teachers’ labour power, such as, for instance, gender, specialisation and seniority, or with students’ social-cultural background - the teachers’ “object” of work. Since differentiations among teachers are not considered, then it follows that it is impossible to develop any problematisation or theorisation of possible forms of teachers’ resistance to the structural constraints. It is assumed that they are all subject to exactly the same process of “degradation” of their work, due to pressures and controls exercised by the capitalist state. Instead of assuming this, we need to conceptualise teachers as a body of working people, mediated by variations in the way they perceive and understand pressures and controls by the state. Such variations have to do, we argue, with teachers’ gender, specialisation and seniority.

To conclude, the usefulness of the labour process theory for the study of teachers’ work lies in the fact that the labour process theory relates, as we will discuss later in this chapter, teachers’ work in the classroom with the wider social and historical context, such as the state, and with issues of control and subordination of their labour process, thus providing us with a more global perspective and deeper understanding of teachers’ working processes.

## **2.6 The Labour Process Theory: Braverman**

Before we discuss teaching as a labour process in detail, we should present Braverman’s work, as it inspired and influenced scholars in the field of education, who saw in his approach to workers’ labour process a potential correspondence with that of teachers. As he indicates in the introduction of his book *Labour and Monopoly Capital* (1974), “no attempt will be made to deal with the modern working class on the level of its consciousness, organisation, or activities” (Braverman, 1974, p.26, 27). Instead, he offers a structural analysis of class “in itself”, not of class “for itself”.

Within the Marxist theoretical context, Braverman's work played a pivotal role in later debates about the production process, because he combined a renewal of Marx's categories with an explanation of the dominant trends in the world of work. His work remains the most systematic and general account of productive labour under capitalism. This, it can be said, is still helpful and rigorous in approaching teachers' labour process in the present times of globalisation. Within the circumstances of globalisation, where schools are being required to act as if they were private businesses driven by the principles of efficiency and market ethos, Braverman's account of workers' labour process seems to indicate that it shares more similarities than differences with that of teachers. Hence, the issues of restrictions on teachers' autonomy and pressures and controls over their labour process show that Braverman's account of the labour process may not be outdated and that teachers' proletarianisation remains an important issue.

His argument is that the needs of the capital accumulation process dictate to capitalists and their management the renovation of the productive process. The main methods for achieving this have been the techniques associated with scientific management and the "scientific/technical revolution." These techniques have contributed to a separation of the conception of productive labour from its execution, a process undertaken by capitalist management as an instrument of control. The task of workers has been progressively to obey managerial instructions in which the managerial phase of production is now incorporated. Braverman argued that in the twentieth century there occurred a "degradation" and "deskilling" of work in capitalist economies (Armstrong, in Watkins, 1992, p.113). This happened because the capitalist organisation of the labour process is continually concerned with cheapening the price of labour and securing effective control over the labour process.

From the above argument on the labour process two issues arise: the issue of *managerial control*, and that of *deskilling*, both main areas of debate in the labour process theory. As a strategy for managerial control, resting on the separation of conception (mental labour) and execution (manual labour), skills are inevitably fragmented and routinized and labour is de-skilled. According to Braverman, this was achieved in the twentieth century through the application of Taylor's theory of scientific management (Taylor, 1911). The central concept of scientific management

is exactly this distinction between conception and execution, that is, between designing tasks and carrying them out.

Deskilling can be described according to Thompson as:

...the incorporation of the crafts, knowledgeable practices and elements of job control held by workers into the functions of management, or operation of machinery. (Thompson, 1989, p.xiv)

The above issues of increased deskilling and managerial control can be seen as creating the basis for the degradation of work, which marks the modern era of Fordism<sup>24</sup>. Fordism refers to the principles and ideas developed by Henry Ford. It generally refers to the development of the modern mass production system, which is mainly characterised by the mass production of homogeneous products and the adoption of standardised work routines (Taylorism). Work has become increasingly subdivided into petty operations that fail to sustain the interest of humans, leading to a feeling of dissatisfaction with the conditions of industrial and office labour.

However, in parallel with this process of degradation of the work of mass workers, including white collar work, Braverman recognised that there can be contradictions. For example, deskilling in some areas can be accompanied by reskilling of a number of workers in other areas through, say, an increased involvement in planning. Nevertheless, he argued that the general tendency was a deskilling and increased managerial control over labour processes.

Two other features of Braverman's analysis of the labour process can be seen as significant in his attempt to understand the totality of production relations of monopoly capitalism. The first one is his attempt to analyse changes which take place in the labour process in the "new" service industries and occupations. The

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<sup>24</sup> Fordism developed in the twentieth century and began to decline in the 1970s. As a result, it is argued that we have entered a post-Fordism era whose main characteristics are: more flexible production, new technologies requiring workers to have diverse skills, better training, more autonomy and responsibility (Ritzer, 1996, p. 306). However, the question can be posed of whether this transition is a reality, since, as Ritzer (ibid) argues, elements of Fordism, such as "McDonaldism", as he calls it, do persist in the so-called post-Fordism era. McDonaldism, as he argues, shares many characteristics of Fordism: homogeneous products, standardised work routines, deskilling.



second is his identification of the importance of the sexual division of labour in the changing structure of employment in different sectors of production. These features of his argumentation have been recognised and appreciated by a wide audience (Elger, 1982, in Wood, S., p.23, 24).

However, his analysis is subject to criticisms which try to specify its deficiencies. The main axis of criticisms was against his overdeterministic approach to workers' labour process and the related issue of the role of "human agency" and "resistance". In particular, we will deal with the general issue of the labour process and then we will relate the analysis to that of teachers' work in order to stress those deficiencies of his theoretical perspective that raise serious questions and cause problems to an in-depth analysis of teachers' labour process.

Here it has to be mentioned that while most of his work focused on industrial workers' labour process, Braverman also examined the labour process of employees who are described by him as the "new middle class", the one which occupies an intermediate position. This class, he argues, "takes its characteristics from *two sides*", namely, the capital and the proletarian condition. More specifically, he maintains, "not only does it receive its petty share in the prerogatives and rewards of capital, but it also bears the mark of the proletarian condition." He included teachers in these categories of intermediate groupings (1974, p. 407).

These middle class workers, Braverman stated, cannot be seen as "part of the class that personifies capital and employs labour" (1974, p. 405); neither can they be part of the class whose labour "helps to control, command and organize" (1974, p.405). However, he argued that those middle layers will experience processes of proletarianisation similar to those of workers, because the capitalist development demands that their work be subject to fragmentation and degradation (Smyth, 2000, p.19).

A dominant theme emerges from many of the Marxist critiques against Braverman concerning the role of working class resistance which seems to be ignored. More specifically, as Coombs argues:

there is hardly a mention in Braverman's book of the role of working class resistance to the process he describes; no mention even of the trade unions...we arrive at what is in fact a more fundamental criticism, namely the relative absence of the role of class struggle in determining the processes which he analyses...' (Coombs, NLR, 107, 1978, p.94)

The absence of any consideration of possible resistance which might be developed by workers, as social subjects who form a collectivity, a class, and not workers as individuals in the labour process, leads Braverman to see the labour process as a static one, failing to grasp the role of class struggles and any possibility for change. As Giddens argues, in his *Labor and Monopoly Capital* Braverman fails to discuss the reactions and resistances of workers to scientific management's control. Giddens notes that Braverman:

...does not acknowledge the significance of such struggle on the level of day-to-day practices on the shopfloor. (Giddens, 1982, p.42, quoted in Watkins, 1992, p.31)

In Giddens's theoretical terms, Braverman seems to conceive the structure of workers' labour process as solely constraining and not enabling. In other words, he conceives of structures independently of the human agents on which they are imposed. Structures, as mentioned above in the account of Castoriadis's thought, are devoid of meaning outside the context of class struggle. Failing to see structures as mediated by human agency, Braverman overlooks the possible enabling aspect of structures for the class struggle.

In considering teachers' work, the above criticism against Braverman might be translated into the view that the classroom, as a work-site, should be seen as a workplace where no conflicts happen and, consequently, no resistances may be developed in teachers' day-to-day practices. Yet there are also other issues in teaching which need to be addressed, such as what the task of teaching as "production" is or what the "products" of teaching are, in short, what kind of labour process teaching is.

The labour process seems to be treated by Braverman as a "closed" and "fixed" terrain where only tight control over the working processes takes place and any form

of resistance could be seen as unconceivable. As Nichols notes, Braverman presents us with a working class without the possibility of consciousness:

...gives us a working class without consciousness and organisation... (1977, p.193)

However, to present a working class without the possibility of consciousness and organisation is to disregard class struggle, which constitutes a fundamental issue of Marxist thought and theory. In the same area of criticism, Burawoy argues that Braverman's analysis of the labour process:

...is exclusively from the side of the object. He repeatedly insists on stressing the mechanisms through which subjectivity is destroyed or rendered ineffectual and through which individuals lose their individuality. (Burawoy, 1978, p.249)

Like Lukacs<sup>25</sup>, Braverman's view of capitalism seems to be that it is a process that subordinates all to its needs and destroys all resistance. By failing to adequately conceptualise the presence of human agency in the unfolding of the labour process, Braverman, in essence, cannot see any possibility for changes and transformations of the labour process. Thus, he can hardly see that there is always a struggle between workers and capital over defining the conditions of workers' subordination and exploitation. His overdeterministic approach to the labour process is a weakness which tends to reappear in the work of other scholars (Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; Apple, 1986) who adopt the labour process theory in education. It is a weakness because control cannot be separated from its structural context, or be grasped outside the subjective contents of worker perceptions of working (Thompson, 1989, p. 88). The criticisms leveled against Braverman's work mainly focus on his self-imposed limitation to examine the development of working class consciousness and struggle by concentrating on its "objective" structure, while overlooking its "subjective" aspects, namely, class consciousness and action.

In the field of education, Braverman's descriptive approach to the working class was adopted by Bowles & Gintis (1976), who endeavoured to show, using a variety of descriptive and statistical data, that education in advanced capitalist societies

reproduces, rather than attenuates, social inequality. In short, Braverman is seen to deal only with class *in-itself* and not *for-itself*. This approach, however, is something that he himself announced in his introduction: "This book is about the working class as a class *in itself*, not a class *for itself*." (Braverman, 1974, p.27)

However valuable the acknowledgement might be, it is evident that this approach remains seriously problematic for understanding the effects of the "objective" situation of class on the "subjective" components of work, in short for the class formation. As Thompson argues:

History only tends to register classes when they make their mark as fully conscious and active agencies. What is needed is emphasis on class formation and action on a day-to-day level. (Thompson, 1983, quoted in Carter, 1995, p.50)

Braverman's approach to the labour process is also problematic in that it remains fragmentary, focusing only on one aspect of the labour process and not on the whole pattern of relationships developed within it; namely, he ignores the side of workers' possible reactions and struggles and, in this context, he ignores the structure of conditions, the opportunities for resistance. His approach is also disabling, because he presents us with quite a "photographic" or static description of the labour process and not with a dynamic one. By deciding to focus only on the objective aspect of the working class, the class *in-itself*<sup>26</sup> and not on the class *for-itself*,<sup>27</sup> he seems to determine class only by its economic situation, the economic level. The political and ideological levels constituting the subjective aspects of working class do not seem to be examined. In short, Braverman's approach to the labour process seems problematic in that he seems to describe the "objective" situation of the working class solely as a series of workers' executive activities in response to orders by the management.

Braverman does not discuss the way workers make sense of and understand their "objective" situation. As Marx in *Capital* (Willmott, 1990, p.350) recognises,

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<sup>25</sup> Lukacs, 1971, *History and Class Consciousness*, Cambridge, MIT press

<sup>26</sup> Class-in-itself: the economic situation of class, the objective determination of class by the production process.

<sup>27</sup> Class for-itself: class with its own "class consciousness", class practices, class struggle.

workers do not necessarily understand their experiences as boring and humiliating; nor do they necessarily ascribe them to the exploitative structure of the capital-labour relation. There is rather a tendency, promoted by capitalist ideologies, to interpret their experiences as a normal effect of impersonal forces such as market needs and technological demands dictated by "progress". All this does not mean that workers are willing to be exploited, but that the capital seems to be successful in legitimising the conditions of their work in a discourse which can easily be absorbed and accepted, because it sounds logical and self-evident.

Thus, "class in itself" and "class for itself" cannot be separated and at the same time maintain their dialectical relationship.<sup>28</sup> This means that Braverman's approach to the labour process seems to be lacking a "dialectical" perspective, in which the interdependence of the "objective" and "subjective" aspects of the labour process will be theorised (Edwards; Wardell; 1990).

By overlooking the "subjective" aspects of the labour process, Braverman presents the "objective" aspects as self-existent entities independent of the human agents who experience them. The significance of dialectics is that it challenges the view that social reality comprises a totality of clearly confined objective entities which exist independently of each other and whose interrelations can be grasped in dualistic terms (Knights, 1990). This remark redirects us to Giddens's concept of the *duality* of structure. The *duality* of structure means that agency and structure cannot be conceived independently from one another, but are interwoven in human practice. In Braverman's case, a dialectical dimension of his study would mean that the study of "objective" work conditions of workers would be related to the "subjective" ones, which in turn are the product of the concrete "objective" structural context.

Braverman's approach to "class" is also problematic when we study teachers' labour process. We cannot ignore the issue of the class location of those working people, whose labour process is being studied, in our case, teachers' class location. Studying teachers' class location, as Braverman would imply, by focusing exclusively on the "objective" aspect of their labour process as a set of orders demanded by the state

and taking place in the classroom, which contribute to their deskilling, without questioning how they understand this process, means there is no consideration of the "subjective" aspects of the labour process, namely, teachers' perceptions and understandings of what the structures mean to them. This approach to teachers' labour process fails to address the issue of class formation, as it focuses exclusively on the structural context, for instance, on the control exercised by the state, and not on teachers' understanding of what this control means to them and whether it is problematic for them or not.

Thus, one possible way to construct a new agenda for studying teachers' labour process is to elaborate the basis for a dialectical analysis. This means that studying transformations of their labour process - the "objective" aspect - should be articulated with a study of its "subjective" aspect. Structure and agency are not two separate, autonomous entities and, therefore, cannot be separated, as we discussed above, but have to be studied as a totality. The labour process as a structural context, as a set of constraining and enabling conditions, is not an external part of teachers' work which is "out there" and, for this reason, it should not be treated and analysed separately from the way teachers perceive and understand this structural context. Hence, a concrete structural framework, located within a specific socio-historical context, produces concrete meanings and understandings which, in turn, constitute a totality along with the structural conditions.

Thus, an adequate analysis of a specific labour process should ideally study the totality of relations developed in this labour process. An in-depth study of these relationships would enable us to understand the dynamics of the structure of the labour process and identify possible sources of resistance, accommodations, compromises and conditions of exploitation.

However, despite the deficiencies and weaknesses in Braverman's theory of the labour process, we want to argue that it still offers us a workable framework and useful conceptual tools for approaching and understanding teachers' labour process. These are his theoretical foundation associated with the issue of control and his

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<sup>28</sup> Here we agree with Poulantzas's (1978) rejection of a distinction between "class -in-itself" and "class-for-itself" and argues that: "Classes exist only in the class struggle" (p.14).

elaboration of the concept of separation of the processes of conception and execution of work, as well as the ensuing issue of deskilling.

To summarise, Braverman's theoretical perspective concerning the labour process should be seen as a useful tool in approaching the "objective" conditions of teachers' labour process in capitalist societies, where the introduction of standardised curricula seems to shape a structural framework within which teachers' work is reduced to the execution of others' guidelines and directions. Nevertheless, it should also be taken into consideration that the role of human agency, in this case the role of teachers - their interpretations and practices -, is of equally great importance when applied to teachers' labour process.

Taking the above discussion into account, this study will proceed to address teachers' labour process by focusing on the articulation of the "objective" and "subjective" facets of their labour process, which are considered, in this study, as two interconnected entities constituting an interweaving totality. In other words, they represent the two facets of the same coin.

## **2.7 State School Teachers and Their Class Location**

Teachers' work has to be located and understood within its wider context, which is the capitalist state. This is because teachers are employed by the state to provide public education. More specifically, in a study of teachers' work which considers teachers as "workers" and teaching as "work", there is a need to clarify and discuss how the category teachers as "workers" is constituted and how their relationship with the capitalist state is shaped. This is because teachers' work in the classroom takes place within a state ideological apparatus -the education system- and it cannot be ignored that this operates within a capitalist context. The need for control in these institutional realities is reflected in the structure of relationships between employer and employee; between the buyer of labour power and the sellers of it, in other words, between the state as buyer and teachers as sellers of labour power. Hence, this section is about the structuring of state school teachers' labour process, which will be used as a context for the discussion of their perceptions and understandings of their labour process.

Like private sector workers, teachers in the public sector sell their labour power and are submitted to the authority of an employer (Smyth, 2000, p.24). For teachers in the public sector the employer is mainly the state.<sup>29</sup> The fundamental management problem for the employers - state, local authorities, school owner - is how to convert teachers' labour into labour power, how, in other words, to obtain the desired work behaviour from teachers in order to get concrete outcomes with regard to the development of students' capacity for social practice.

Consequently, control is as central to teachers' labour process as it is to private sector workers. It is the function of management, through its hierarchy of control in the private sector, to discipline, supervise, control and turn workers' capacity to work into a recognizable, purposive, productive activity. Since teachers working in the public sector are not directly employed by capitalists, it is not immediately clear whether their work will be controlled and regulated in the same way as in the case of workers in the private sector. Labour power is purchased by capitalists who organise the labour process in order to obtain products and services which can be sold. This can be better understood if we consider those working in the private sector – including teachers – as similar to workers in factories. In that sphere, the production process requires workers to work purposively on raw materials using instruments and equipment in order to produce goods or services. At the end of this process, when products are sold, the capitalist converts his or her property into money and, if he/she gets back more money than invested, then it is said that he/she made a profit. In the private sector the labour process should be grasped as an aspect of the cycle of the capital (Smyth, 2000, p.22). Although teachers working in the public sector do not produce services which are going to be sold in the market for profit, as do teachers in the private sector, there still might be identified similarities with the production of goods and services by workers. These educational services have a “symbolic” value, “equivalent” to money. To be more specific, they take the form of educational targets as defined by the state which have to satisfy the standards posed by the state or the educational authorities.

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<sup>29</sup> While it is not the rule, there are many cases where the role of employer is held by the local authorities or, in the case of teachers working in the private sector, by the owner or the management of the private school.



The fact that teachers in the public sector are not employed by capitalists who are interested in accumulating profits indicates that teachers are not exploited in the way that private sector workers are.<sup>30</sup> Answers to the question of whether state sector teachers are exploited in the same way as private sector workers have centered round the issues of productive and unproductive labour (Harris, 1982, 1994), in short, whether their labour gives rise to a form of exploitation. The crucial issue from a labour process perspective is whether state workers perform surplus labour and produce commodities that generate use value. According to Marx, productive labour is the labour which produces surplus-value (Marx, *Capital*, vol. I). It is the labour which produces, on the basis of use-values, exchange-values in the form of commodities and, consequently, surplus-value, and gives rise to a form of exploitation.

This approach becomes problematic when we have to consider groups of agents, such as civil servants employed by the state and its various apparatuses, who do not directly produce surplus value. This is the case of teachers. Teachers' work, as discussed in the first section, involves the transformation of students' capacities in order to become "capable for social practice". This can be translated, as we saw, into "capacity to labour". From this it can be inferred that schooling and teachers, as members of an educational state apparatus, contribute to the reproduction of the labour power necessary for capitalist production, by inculcating in students the attitudes and values necessary to the maintenance of commodity production.

In the case of teachers, the concept of "collective labour"<sup>31</sup> offers another perspective on their work. Through their contribution to skilling future labour power, teachers are indirectly contributing to the generation of surplus value as a part of the total production process (Smyth, 2000, p.23). Freeland puts it this way:

Schooling is essentially linked with the capitalist labour market through the credentialling processes and more directly through developing skills and knowledge which increase labour

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<sup>30</sup> Exploitation refers to the process whereby the owners of the means of production, the dominant class, extract surplus labour from the non-owners, the subordinate class (Gough, 1979, ch. 2). In other words, exploitation refers to the conditions of "willingness" to exchange labour power for "rewards".

productivity. In this sense schooling is indirectly productive of surplus value and hence of considerable importance to capital. (1986, p. 214, quoted in Smyth, 2000, p.23)

Apart from performing the function of skilling the future labour force, teachers are also performing the function of surveillance and control of students. This is done through instilling particular norms, habits, values and attitudes in pupils; through their role in the certification and selection processes of schooling; through police-type activities; and through legitimating school knowledge as being most valuable (Harris, 1982, p.129).

Thus, what follows from the above discussion is that teachers constitute a group of working people who do not fall readily into the category of labour in the same unequivocal way as private sector workers in factories and offices do. In many accounts, the assumption was that teachers were middle-class, either by social background or through social mobility. These claims, in accordance with Weber's perspective on class and status, argue about class paradigms in which "white-collar labour" was automatically granted a higher status (Parkin, 1971, Roberts et al., 1977; Abercrombie & Urry, 1981; quoted by Carter, 1997). More recent approaches stressing the role of a service class would also see teachers in a different class from manual workers (Lash & Urry, 1987). This perspective is also reflected in some works designated Marxist. For instance, Wright's approach to teachers distinguishes teachers from manual workers on the basis that they possess skills and credential assets. Within this corpus of Marxist analysis, the central idea in respect to teachers' class location is that of a middle class, either as a new class or as a version of the petty bourgeoisie. The idea behind much of this writing is the growth of white-collar and service industry as well as the number of State personnel<sup>32</sup> (Ozga, 1981, p.42). Yet little work has referred directly to teachers; they are usually considered as part of the "State personnel".

According to Wright's initial formulation of teachers' class location, teachers occupy a contradictory position in the basic class structure. They are located between the

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<sup>31</sup> "Collective labourer": Marxian term which refers to the group brought together to produce a commodity.

<sup>32</sup> The term "state personnel" was used by Poulantzas (1978) in *State, Power, Socialism*, (pp. 154-160).

working class and the petite bourgeoisie at the level of production relations, for teachers generally have a reasonable degree of control over their work process, but little control over the educational system (Wright, 1979b, quoted by Watkins, 1992, p. 14).

One should expect that a restructuring of teachers' work which affects their autonomy and control of their labour process might have some consequences on teachers' class location. This means that if, as Wright (1979b, quoted by Watkins, 1992, p.14) argues:

...the degree of autonomy of teachers within the social relations of production varies enormously across time and place,

then the issues of autonomy and control of teachers' labour process need to be studied within the concrete social contexts. This is accepted on the grounds that capitalist societies do not all experience the same degree of development of, or identical modalities of, class struggle. Also, this is true for a capitalist society across time, and the development of class struggle is not static but is connected to the development of the productive forces.

At the ideological level, Wright places teachers between the bourgeoisie and the working class. In particular, he maintains that:

To the extent that teachers have a certain real level of autonomy at the level of the social relations of (educational) production, they can potentially subvert bourgeois ideology at the level of ideological relations. They are thus in potential contradiction as, despite proletarianisation at the economic level, they remain in contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat at the ideological level. Teachers, then, occupy objectively contradictory locations within class locations. (Wright, 1979, quoted by Ozga & Lawn, 1981, p.55)

In his view (Wright, 1979, p.203), most intellectual wage labour would be part of a "semi-autonomous employee category". Semi-autonomous employees, like workers, are employed by the capital or the state and they do not own or control the means of

production as a whole. Unlike workers, however, and like the petty bourgeoisie, they do have real control over much of their labour process. Thus, in his later works (Wright, 1985), Wright appears to be arguing that it is the interests of teachers which are contradictory, emanating from their particular location in the labour process. He argues that teachers are in a contradictory location because they hold contradictory interests with regard to the on-going struggle between labour and capital and he explains:

on the one hand they are like workers in being excluded from ownership of the means of production; on the other, they have interests opposed to workers because of the effective control of organisation and skill assets. (Wright, 1985, p.87)

However, an issue which needs to be analysed is whether or not this control of organisation is realised within a specific social context. It is not *a priori* given that teachers in capitalist societies have effective control of their immediate working conditions; it is a contested terrain, an area of struggles in order to obtain effective control of their labour process. Thus, it is an issue which needs to be empirically studied within a concrete social context and it is exactly this aspect of teachers' labour process which this study will approach. To be more accurate, the specificity of this piece of research is to study whether and how teachers' control of their immediate working conditions exists in times when there is a restructuring of their labour process taking place through the introduction of prescribed curricula.

Harris (1982, 1990) is not far from Wright's general formulation which argues that teachers are workers employed by the state to perform specific activities, with little control over their labour process and whose labour is considered as unproductive and contributing to the overall conditions of capitalist production. However, he notes that, even though they share many characteristics with the working class, they do not belong to the working class (Harris, 1982, p.128). In a more recent argument Harris sees a clear distinction between teachers and workers. This is based on the increased ideological control and surveillance over the performance of teachers. His argument is that:

teachers can expect to lose economic ground, as well as (political and ideological) social status, along with others in class location...they can expect to do more controlling and less curricular instructing for their money and, in the process, find their instruction function deskilled; they are likely, globally, to lose aspects of control over the content they teach and the conditions under which they work; but they will not become members of the proletariat, at least while they work for the capitalist state and maintain their control function. (Harris, 1992, pp.164-5)

In general, as Ozga and Lawn (1981, p.56) observe, the idea of a contradictory class located teacher, probably proletarianised at the economic level, but acting as an ideological oppressor (because they - wittingly or unwittingly- inscribe to students the dominant ideology) of the working class, is becoming an orthodox belief among Marxist sociologists of education.<sup>33</sup> Ozga and Lawn have a point here in that the main focus of Marxist sociology of education is on the role of schooling in the reproduction of the capitalist societies and not so much on teachers as workers within it. Teachers, within this perspective, are considered as agents of capitalist reproduction.

Arguing against the "new orthodoxy" amongst Marxists, Ozga and Lawn are able to dismiss the claim that teachers, being unproductive workers, should therefore be located in a different class from productive workers (Poulantzas, 1975). The argument that teachers are automatic transmitters of dominant class ideologies (Althusser, 1971) is similarly, as they argue, not supportable. As they argue, the relationship between the function of education as required by the state and the activities carried out in schools by teachers is a complex one and not simply a matter of reproduction and indoctrination. Not to recognise this, as they characteristically state:

...is to ignore teachers' historical struggles for working class education and to embrace a pessimistic determinism which renders teachers and other workers mere social puppets. (Ozga & Lawn, 1981, p. 62)

Ozga and Lawn are, to an extent, justified in their criticism of the perspective which

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<sup>33</sup> In the same light, Poulantzas (1978, p.273) argues that: *a large part of the repressive and ideological state apparatuses (teachers, journalists, social workers, etc.) participate, even if in a simple executive capacity...in the tasks of ideological inculcation and political repression of the dominated classes...* Along the same lines is Althusser's analysis of education in his essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Positions (Theseis)*, 1978, Athens, Themelio, p. 95 (in Greek).

sees teachers automatically as transmitters of dominant class ideologies. We say "to an extent" because it is, we think, partly true. They are right because the above view of teachers fails to take into consideration teachers' struggles for working class education. But to put all the emphasis on teachers' struggles means that they are considered successful by definition, which would be too optimistic. Hence, the complexity of the relationship between the function of education as required by the capitalist state and teachers' activities in schools, lies in the fact that the capitalist state should not be conceived as a static, across time and space, entity. The demands, needs and policies of the capitalist state should be approached within specific socio-historical contexts.

In their later work Ozga and Lawn (1988) recognise some of the problems that emerge from their analysis. In particular, they acknowledge the separation of the developed thesis of teachers' proletarianisation - which will be developed in the following section - from class analysis. More specifically, they maintain that "superficially, the evidence of increased control over teachers' work, of the division between management and the workforce, and of monitoring performance through the use of appraisal schemes as management tools, together makes a more convincing case (for teachers' proletarianisation) than we were able to offer in 1981" (1988, quoted in Carter, 1997, p.206). Yet there are "real difficulties", as they claim (1988, p.327), with the proletarianisation thesis. More specifically, they argue that "the demonstration of class consciousness or class position as a consequence of proletarianisation is much more problematic" (1988, p.327). This leads us to infer that proletarianisation and its consequences on class position can hardly be identified and studied within their framework.

Ozga and Lawn criticise Braverman's work by suggesting that deskilling can be challenged "both on the grounds that the process is not as widespread as he suggests, and that it is not inevitable that technical deskilling results in absolute loss of skill, an important component of skill lying in its social construction" (1988, p.328). The above criticism of Braverman seems to point to the fact that they place their emphasis on human agency and not on the structural context within which deskilling is realised, namely, capitalism and its need for reproducing the capitalist relations. By suggesting the social construction of skill, Ozga and Lawn seem to adopt an

interpretive theory of work which prioritises subjective meanings and perceptions of the work processes, thus prioritising human agent and neglecting structure. As Shilling (1992, p.77) claims, they fail to link structure and human agency in their analysis. As a result, the dualism they recognised in their earlier work (Ozga & Lawn, 1988, p.329) reappears at the end of their analysis. They argue that "labour process research should be based on investigation, not *a priori* judgement, variations must be taken account of and outcomes treated as problematic" (1988, pp.329, 330). This is a suggestion which this study will follow and apply to the Greek case.

The above approaches to teachers' class determination represent significant advances in understanding teachers' class location within the class structure of developed capitalist countries. We say "significant" because, on the one hand, they take seriously into account the structural context within which teachers work, and, on the other, they introduce the parameter of subjective meanings of labour processes. These can be seen as two issues to be examined when we try to develop a theoretical perspective on teachers' class location. However, we need to clarify certain issues.

Teachers' autonomy, as far as issues of the organisation of their daily teaching work are concerned, i.e., the pace and sequence of their teaching, in primary and secondary education, is an issue which needs to be studied empirically, as teachers do not all share the same degree of autonomy. Teachers in secondary education might be seen as having less autonomy compared with those in primary education, in that secondary education is "closer" to the labour market than primary is. In Britain, as Sarup (1983, p.121) argues, the pressures put on teachers in secondary education through an examination system controlled by universities point to the fact that teachers should not be treated across sectors as a homogeneous group.

The restructuring of teachers' work, through control over their labour process and restrictions on autonomy, might be seen as an indication that their control over their labour process is restricted and, because of that, they might be closer to the working class than before. An example of this is the introduction of the National Curriculum in Britain which, as Helsby (1999, p.64) argues:

...can be seen as a clear attempt by the state to reassert central control of the state curriculum.

At this point, however, we agree with Harris' argument about teachers' class formation, when he claims that so long as capitalism exists, teachers:

...will not become members of the proletariat, at least while they work for the capitalist state and maintain their control function. (Harris, 1992, p. 165)

This is because of the central, crucial function education performs in maintaining and reproducing the status quo of capitalist societies. Teachers' class location and formation should not be seen independently of the role education is playing in such societies, but at the same time, it should not be reduced merely to the capitalist needs and demands. If it is thus reduced to capitalist demands, then this means that we fail to take into consideration the class struggle. Control and surveillance are the *sine qua non* of the existence of education as an Ideological State Apparatus. Thus, so long as control and surveillance cannot be achieved but through the teachers, they hardly seem likely to become members of a proletariat. In short, the state, insofar as it needs them, will try, as Harris (1992, p.164) argues, "to maintain marginal economic privilege over the working class", and also privilege of their esteem, in order to ensure that the control and surveillance functions will be performed.

Harris's perspective on teachers' class location seems to arise from the role of education in capitalist relations and, consequently, teachers' role within it. This approach seems to be characterised by a deterministic view of teachers' class location, in that teachers' class location is determined and conceived of only through the structural context - the objective conditions- within which teachers work. This approach to class seems to be a static one, leaves little room for and does not assign any weight to the subjectivity of individuals, for elements such as their beliefs, ideas, social meanings and preferences. In other words, it does not consider "class consciousness" as the expression of the concrete subjectivity of individuals (Wright, 1985, p.243). It is this concept of "class consciousness" which this study will use<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> The term "class consciousness" has two different usages in the Marxist tradition. The first has to do with "class consciousness" as a characteristic of classes as collective entities and the second one refers to "class consciousness" as a concrete attribute of individuals as members of class (Wright, 1985, p.242). This study uses the second sense of the term. Once again, what seems to be at stake here is the importance of the subjectivity of individuals. The second sense of the term seems to neglect human subjectivity.



It is again, as discussed in Braverman's case, the subjective dimension of social practice, of class in-itself and for-itself, which seems to remain underdeveloped in the kind of approach to the Marxist tradition Braverman follows (Wardell, 1990, p.173, note 2). To study "consciousness", as Wright (1985, p.244) maintains, is to study those aspects of an individual subjectivity which are *discursively accessible to the individual's own awareness*.

Investigating teachers' views of their everyday labour process in the classroom, and not only the objective conditions of their work, could contribute to a fuller understanding of teachers' work processes. In particular, we need to explore how teachers themselves perceive and understand their work processes. We have to examine what, for example, they perceive as "control and surveillance" functions. Teachers' class should not only be assumed, by being reduced to functionalist prerequisites, but should equally be traced as a lived experience.

An issue which might arise from such an approach to class is what Althusser (1971, p. 153) describes as "false consciousness". More specifically, he argues that "false consciousness" can be seen as the: *representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence*. This means that individuals do not perceive and understand their objective/ real conditions of work, for instance control and surveillance, as problematic and thus tend to develop an imaginary relationship with them.

This aspect of "consciousness", we argue, can be faced methodologically when a study, as this intends to do, approaches both the "objective" and "subjective" aspects of labour process as a duality and not in an autonomous way with respect to either dimension. Thus teachers' understandings and views should be inscribed and contextualised within the specific structural context, and can be "tested" and "validated" from the study and analysis of the specific "objective" structural context. This study, therefore, accepts as objects of analysis both the "objective" conditions of teachers' work -class in itself- and the "subjective" aspects of it - class for itself-, the way these are perceived and signified, and their articulation.

To summarise, teachers' class location is determined by: "objective" factors such as economic, political and ideological ones and by "subjective" factors, namely, by their understanding of the specific structural context, that is, their "class consciousness". Teachers, on the one hand, as Wright (1985, p.87) argues, do not own the means of production in the way workers do and, on the other, they have interests opposed to workers because of the control of the immediate work conditions and skill assets.

## 2.8 Teaching as a Labour Process

Having discussed, in section 2.6 above, teachers' class location as this is determined by the economic, political and ideological functions they perform within the capitalist context, now, in this section, the focus will be on the nature of teaching as a labour process. In particular, here we will give an overall account of the structuring of teaching as a labour process, of its components and its aspects, in order to lay the basis for the empirical aspect of the study.

Before we describe teaching as a labour process, we will see what the term "labour process" means in its broader sense. According to the Dictionary of Marxist thought referred to above (footnote 22), the term labour process means:

...at its simplest labour process is the process whereby labour is materialized or objectified in USE VALUES. Labour is here an interaction between the person who works and the natural world such that elements of the latter are consciously altered in a purposive manner. (Dictionary of Marxist Thought, 1983, (eds) Bottomore, p.267)

Marx (1976, p.284, cited in Knights, 1990, p.77), from whom the term originally derived, outlined the basic components of the labour process as follows: first, the work itself, a purposive productive *activity*; second, the *object(s)* on which that work is performed; and third, the *instruments* which facilitate the process of work. The objects of work and the instruments of work together are called the "means of production". The alteration in the object of work affected by labour is the creation of

use value. However, in capitalism<sup>35</sup> the products are use values for the capitalist only insofar as they are bearers of exchange value. Thus, the labour process is concerned with the qualitative movement in production, a process with a definite purpose and content, producing a particular kind of product (i.e. a commodity for the capitalist) (Dictionary of Marxist Thought, p.267).

The above definitions point to the fact that there is something a little mysterious at the heart of the business of teaching as a productive activity within a labour process framework. In more formal terms, as characteristically described by Connell:

Teaching is a labour process without an object. At best, it has an object so intangible - the minds of the kids, or their capacity to learn- that it cannot be specified in any but vague and metaphorical ways. A great deal of work is done in schools, day in and day out, but this work does not produce any *things*. Nor does it, like other white-collar work, produce visible and quantifiable *effects*- so many pensions paid, so many dollars turned over, so many patients cured. The "outcomes of teaching" are notoriously difficult to measure. (Connell, 1985, p.70)

For these reasons, it is difficult to pin down teaching "work" as being realised within a labour process without a clearly defined object, in the sense of the physical product. The core of the enterprise, getting pupils to learn, is a highly complicated process, involving emotional relationships, intellectual interaction, group dynamics, and the exercise of practical judgment in a constantly changing situation (Seddon, 1997, p. 706). In short, the relations in work involve a degree of cooperation between teachers and students, subordination, discipline and surveillance.

As Connell (1994, p. 138) notes, "teachers are the front-line workers in schools...[and] education as a cultural enterprise is constituted in and through their labour".

Hence, if we wanted to outline the pattern of teaching as a labour process, this could be described as follows: teaching consists of a process of transformation of students from a given condition of recognised knowing to a new one. The labour of teaching

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<sup>35</sup> Capitalism: "a mode of production based on the generalised production of commodities for exchange and profit" (Thompson, P., 1989, glossary).

is an interaction between teacher and student, in order for the latter to be altered in a purposive manner. This leads us to Connell's recognition that:

Teachers are workers, teaching is work, and the school is a workplace. (Connell, 1985, p.69)

The first element of teaching as a labour process is teachers' labour power: labour power is a general term and it refers to the teachers' capacity to work which is bought and employed by the state, local authorities or owners of private schools. In short, labour power can be defined as teachers' capacity to perform educational activities. The general term of labour power is specified and concretised through the notion of "skill". Skill defines the specific aspects of teachers' labour power needed in order to perform the purposive productive activity, which constitutes one of the three elements of labour process. Skill is described (Macmillan Student Encyclopedia, Sociology, p. 356) *as a slippery concept, usually defined in "technicist" terms by reference to a combination of learnt expertise in a repertoire of actions or activities, together with the mental ability to apply them effectively and resourcefully*. Hence, in the teachers' case an example of skill could be their ability to plan and organise their daily teaching, as far as issues of pace and sequence are concerned.

However, skill should not only be described in "technicist" terms. It is also a social term. This means that its content is not given and static, but is defined and determined within the concrete socio-historical context within which it operates. For example, in the teachers' case, planning and organising daily teaching could be seen as skills which are demanded of teachers within a specific social context -temporal or spatial- but which are not considered as necessary and restricted within another socio-historical context. Within the conceptual context of the labour process theory, "skill" refers to the unity of conception and execution in the labour process. Consequently, deskilling essentially means the loss of conceptual mastery, and not task simplification or fragmentation of the tasks. These tend to follow as consequences of deskilling (Armstrong, 1992, p.118).

Another element of teaching as a labour process is the purposive productive activity of teachers. This can be seen as the *process of transformation* of students, from a given stage of knowledge, values and attitudes to a new one. The second element

comprises the “objects” on which the work is performed. As such can be cited the “students”, active human agents, coming from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, “owned” by their parents and the state or the local authorities in the sense that they are the future citizens. They come from a variety of different socioeconomic backgrounds and different social classes, which, to a large extent, determines what the students themselves bring to the process, namely, their cultural background. By differences in their cultural background we mean, for example, differences in their dispositions towards knowledge, what Bourdieu refers to as *habitus*<sup>36</sup> and educational resources. In short, they are carriers, as Bourdieu argues, of different “*cultural capital*” (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243).

The third element relates to the instruments which facilitate the process of work/teaching. As instruments we may identify several components: firstly, the indirectly involved elements such as infrastructure (buildings, laboratories, equipment and teaching resources) which are owned by the state; secondly, as an instrument of teachers’ work can be seen the “*curriculum*.” According to Bernstein (1975, p.85), the curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge. The “object” of teaching, namely, the students’ minds and behaviours, together with the above described as “instruments” of teaching, comprise the “means of production”. The relationships developed between teachers and students constitute the “relations in production”.<sup>37</sup>

In the teachers’ case, the term production signifies a process of transformation of students into “new social subjects”, capable “for social practice” which is realised through the transmission and transformation of knowledge (curriculum). The form of transmission of knowledge is determined by the structure of the context, of the *frame*, in Bernstein’s terms, in which knowledge is transmitted and received. Thus, the “frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the

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<sup>36</sup> *Habitus*: according to Bourdieu, *habitus* are systems of durable and transportable dispositions (Bourdieu, 1990, p.53).

<sup>37</sup> We use the term “relations in production” and not the Marxist “relations of production” because the latter refers to issues of ownership and control of the means of production, which it is impossible to apply in the teachers’ case. For example, who is the owner of “students’ minds”? The state, their parents, teachers, they themselves? It is, we think, a philosophical issue which cannot be developed in the context of this study.

pedagogical relationship” (Bernstein, 1975, p.89). When we talk about “relations in production” we mean who controls what is to be transmitted, teachers, students or state or others. The above signification of the context within which the transmission of knowledge takes place might be translated into the following three types of control, as far as the issues of the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of knowledge are concerned.

In the first case, the issues of selection, organisation, pacing and timing of knowledge could be controlled by teachers, in the second case by pupils, and there could be a third case, where neither of the above two participants – teachers or pupils - can control the issues of selection, organisation, pacing and timing of knowledge. In this last case, the control could be exercised by the state or by local authorities, in short, by any agent other than teachers and pupils. In other words, the above presented three types of control describe three types of relations in production.

The third type of control could refer to the case of the introduction by the state of predetermined and standardised curricula where the control of selection, organisation, pacing and timing is mainly exercised by the state. In this case the state/educational authorities could be seen as performing the function of the “conception” of the way knowledge is going to be selected, organised and “delivered” to students. Teachers could be seen as accomplishing the function of “execution”. Students, in turn, could be seen as acting as the “executors” of their teachers’ directions and guidelines. Thus, teachers here seem not to be able to exercise control over their labour process in the classroom, as a consequence of the separation of the processes of “conception” from “execution”, in Braverman’s terminology.

This type of control of teachers’ labour process is the focus of the labour process theory in education. To be more specific, the theory conceives teachers’ labour process as a terrain where pressures and controls are exercised by the state and indirectly by the capital, which, under the spirit of a rationalisation process, will contribute to the ensuring of concrete outcomes and the fulfilment of specific education targets. However, although the labour process theory locates teachers’ work within the capitalist state, it does not contextualise this within the classroom. To approach teachers’ work within the capitalist state is a necessary condition in

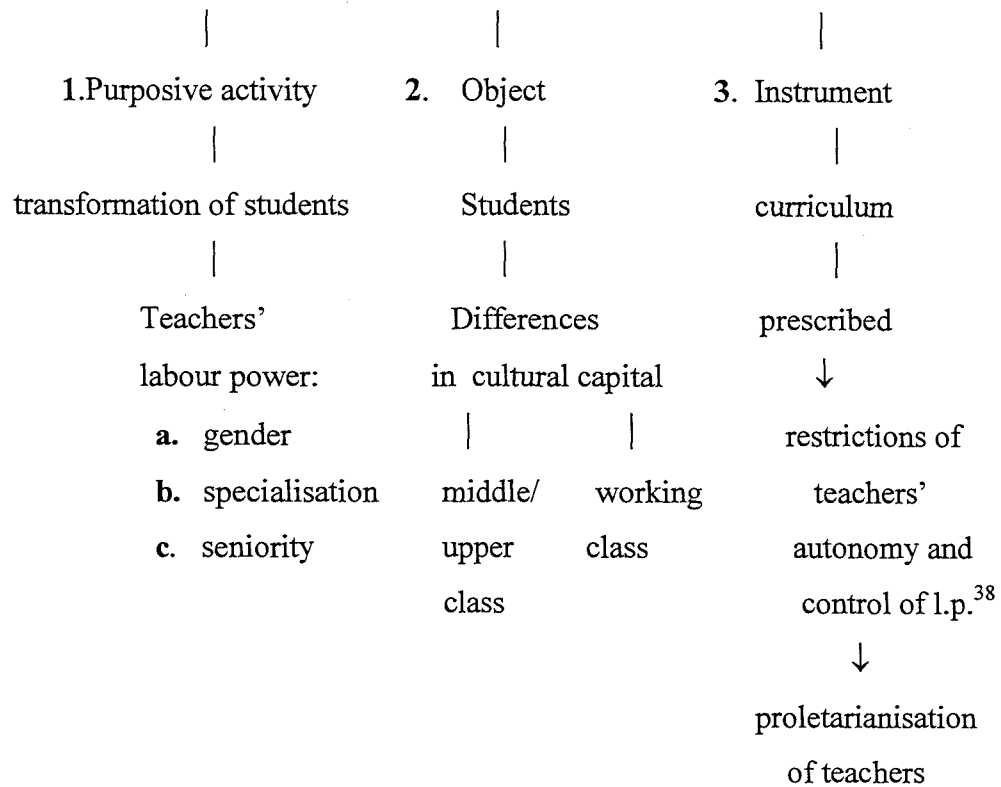
order to analyse and study it. Yet, we argue, it is not a sufficient one, because it is exactly within the classroom that this labour process is specified and realised. Failure to contextualise teachers' work within classrooms, where production takes place and the relationships between teachers and students (relations in production) are developed, means that the labour process theory fails to see teachers' labour process as a relationship which needs two aspects in order to be developed. Teachers' labour process and the education production process are not separated processes; they constitute an entity. The production process is realised through the concrete shaping of the labour process.

In other words, the labour process theory (Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; White, 1983; Apple, 1986; Lawn & Ozga, 1988; Carlson, 1992; Watkins, 1992) typically fails to conceptualise students as vital participants in teachers' labour process and, consequently, fails to conceive the duality of the structure of the labour process. More specifically, the means of production - the "object" (students' cultural capital) and *habitus* towards knowledge and the "instrument" (curriculum) - could be seen, each one separately, as structural determinants which are characterised by a duality. This means that the "object" (students) can be seen as a disabling and, at the same time, as an enabling structure. The same can be said of the "curriculum"; it can be seen as an enabling and disabling structural context.

The scholars referred to above, who use the labour process theory for analysing teachers' work, seem to approach and conceptualize it only by reference to teachers as workers; *students are ignored*.

The above-discussed model could schematically take the following form:

### Teachers' labour process: 3 elements (1.2.3)



( — ): means a logical relationship.

( → ): means a casual relationship.

Let us identify the forms the teachers' labour process takes in the classroom setting. The "production" of new social beings can be seen as corresponding to the production of "use values" in the Marxist model. According to the labour process description, the products are use-values for the capitalist and the capitalist state, only and insofar as they are bearers of exchange value, and the same can be said to be happening in the case of teachers' labour process. The "new social subjects" – students – are "use values" for the capitalist economy only to the degree that they are bearers of exchange value, which means, only when they can exchange their skills, knowledge, values and attitudes with a position in the labour market.

It may be argued that in the teachers' labour process the key element seems to be the formal curriculum. The curriculum can be seen as the "key" element to the extent that it constitutes the framework which teachers have to follow in order to achieve

<sup>38</sup> L. p.: labour process.



the predetermined (by the state or educational authorities) targets, in short, the production targets. The formal curriculum can include - in varying degrees of specificity depending on the structure of an educational system, centralised or not - such aspects as aims, content, sequence, method and assessment. The formal curriculum is accompanied by a hidden curriculum<sup>39</sup> where the teachers' role is also active - as in the case of the formal one - through their practices, such as, for example, classroom reward structures and classroom rules and procedures. Hence, the aim of both curricula, formal and hidden, is to ensure the "production of new social beings", the production of concrete outcomes. Both the formal curriculum and the hidden one define the teachers' task and they describe the targets, ideals, the nature of the "capacities for social practice" that are being developed, in short, they both frame the aims of teaching.

This operates as follows: the formal curriculum ensures that a specific kind of knowledge will be taught and the hidden curriculum ensures that teaching, which is located within a concrete classroom context, will be accompanied by concrete classroom reward structures, rules and procedures. Hence, to the extent that the curriculum, as described above, contributes to the "production of new social beings" which lies at the centre of teachers' labour process, then, as Smyth argues:

...the main specification of the labour process of teaching, and the nature of this specification is political and therefore contested (Smyth, 2000, p.37)

The political nature of the curriculum follows from the very fact that it is a product and outcome of politics. This means that the views on what kind of knowledge schools should "deliver" through the formal curriculum vary. The political context, for example, the state, as expressed by the Government and the Ministry of Education, may have different views from those of teachers, students and their parents. Moreover, teachers, students and parents cannot be seen as homogeneous social groups which all expect the same kind of knowledge. Variations concerning

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<sup>39</sup> Hidden curriculum: the organisational arrangements and practices which establish the "right way" to function in classrooms, schools and educational systems (Smyth, 2000, p.26). Educational practices treated as part of the hidden curriculum include "ability grouping, teacher-pupil relationships, classroom rules and procedures, implicit textbook content, sex-role differentiation of pupils and classroom reward structures." (International Encyclopedia of Curriculum, 1991, p.40)

their socio-economic position in the system of social stratification affect and shape their views and preferences on knowledge. Employers, for example, seem to see education as a “producer” of skilled labour power. Parents may have specific expectations from education, such as enhancing the life opportunities of their children or inculcating a particular set of values and beliefs.

In a capitalist society, where the role of education as a state apparatus is to contribute to the reproduction of the relations of production, with the provision of potential labour power, the curriculum could be seen as playing the role of safeguarding this reproduction, and it is exactly for this reason that it constitutes the main specification of teachers’ labour process. It is a political specification to the degree that education, as discussed in the previous section, is one of the ideological state apparatuses which contribute to the reproduction of the wider social order. As such, education constitutes a terrain of conflicts and struggles between social groups with conflicting interests in order to control the role of curriculum in society. Education is also the main *locus* of control upon which the state intervenes. Given the role education plays in capitalist societies, as we saw above, as well as the fact that it is the teachers who are expected to implement a specific curriculum and the fact that they might not necessarily agree and accept the outcome of this process, then a range of controls can be developed by the state in order to make sure that teachers will work in such ways that the predetermined outcomes will be achieved. In other words, any possibilities and attempts by teachers to resist the state’s demands must, so far as the state is concerned, be discouraged and neutralised, while still maintaining a sense of “professional”<sup>40</sup> legitimacy.

Having referred to the rationale for the state exercising its control over teachers’ labour process, we will now attempt to present the way teachers’ work is controlled and the aspects of their labour process upon which control is exercised. Since the object of the labour process of teaching is the development of students’ “capacities for social practice”, then it might be expected that control will be located in the way knowledge is defined (curriculum) and then transmitted to students (pedagogy).

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<sup>40</sup> Professional: here we have a contradiction. On the one hand, the state buys teachers’ labour power because they, as professionals, know how to do the specific kind of job required and, on the other, it discourages them from developing their views as professionals and from resisting its demands.

Control does not solely have to do with the curriculum and pedagogy; it could also be related to teachers' recruitment practices and the methods of their assessment.

Hence, teaching means and presupposes *relationships* between teachers and students, arising while the process of transformation of students takes place in the classroom. These relationships are mediated by the curriculum whose nature is a political one. It is political in that it is constituted and shaped through power relations. Without this relationship teachers' work is inconceivable. In short, it is exactly this parameter, namely the "students" that, as discussed above, the labour process theory fails to take into consideration and we argue that it is a serious omission because it gives us teachers' work without its "object", the students.

Teachers' labour process is analysed, by the labour process theory in education, only by focusing on controls and pressures developed by the capitalist state on teachers' labour process which become the focus of the proletarianisation thesis. The thesis developed by labour process theorists in the 1980s argued that teachers were becoming proletarianised. The analysis of the proletarianisation thesis will be the focus of the following section.

## **2.9 The Teacher Proletarianisation Thesis Re-visited**

By the early 1980s, as we have seen, a number of education scholars with their analyses of the job of school teaching had pointed overwhelmingly to a process of proletarianisation taking place, which resulted in loss of autonomy, control and professionalism within teaching (Apple, 1986; Apple, 1988; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1986; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Harris, 1982; Lawn, 1985; Lawn & Grace, 1987; Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Lawn & Ozga 1988; Ozga, 1988;). According to Lawn and Grace, "a powerful thesis is being constructed which suggests that teachers are being proletarianised" (Lawn & Grace, 1987, p. ix). But how does this process of proletarianisation operate?

Proletarianisation, following Braverman (1974), is the process which occurs when the worker is deprived of the capacity to both initiate and execute work; it is,

fundamentally, the separation of conception from execution, and the breaking down of execution into separate, controllable parts. This process deskills the worker, resulting in a) the erosion of workers' autonomy, concerning both relations-in and relations-of production, b) the decline of craft skills and c) the increase of management controls. In industry a familiar example of this was the use of "scientific management", of what is called Taylorism. Braverman argues that the development of science, technology and mechanisation have eliminated any form of control the worker may have had. In this case, the skilled worker has increasingly lost any autonomy, becoming "a liaison man between machine and operating management" (Braverman, 1974, p.220).

In the teachers' case, the proletarianisation process is likely to be different from that of workers as described by Braverman. When we discuss the proletarianisation process and teachers' work, we have to think of teaching as "a complicated" and flexible labour process (Apple & Teitelbaum, 1986, Apple, 2000, p. 115). It is a labour process that is significantly different from that of working on an assembly line, or in an office. But it could also be argued that despite these differences, pressures and controls on the labour process are being increasingly experienced by teachers. In particular, the scholars presented above locate their argument for proletarianisation within the framework of developed capitalist social formations and, in particular, what they have in mind is the developments in curriculum and teaching during the '80s in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. As Apple argues:

not only in the United States, but in Britain, Canada and elsewhere, transformations in the control of curriculum and teaching are occurring that are linked in some very powerful ways to changes in the control of culture, politics and the economy in general. (1986, p.177)

In *Teachers and Classes* (Harris, 1982, pp.67, 70-3) Harris makes it clear that proletarianisation is not to be confused with "becoming a member of the proletariat." Proletarianisation, he argues, is the *limiting point* of the economic process of devaluation of labour power from skilled to average levels, and becoming a member of the proletariat indicates the marking of a class location after the economic process is complete, and after certain political and ideological conditions have been met.

The witnessing of some of these transformations in teaching, it could be argued, has impacts on *how* teachers do and perceive their jobs. To put it another way, transformations in the control of teachers' labour process should be seen as a restructuring of their labour process which contributes to a reshaping of the relations in production in schools and in classrooms.

In the 1980s the role of teachers in determining what happens in the classroom seems to have been called in question in advanced capitalist societies. A growing process of state interventions started to take place and, increasingly, teaching methods, texts, tests and outcomes were being taken out of the hands of people who were required to put them into practice. Instead, they were being legislated by national or state departments of education or in state legislatures (Apple, 1986, p.179, Apple, 2000, pp.116,117). As a result, teachers' autonomy was restricted <sup>41</sup> and, consequently, they can be seen as "executors" of others' directions and guidelines.

In the late 1990s, as Lawn (1999, p.103) argues the English school system has been radically reconstructed and the driving forces for this change, according to him are "the marketisation of the public services, the centralisation of power by Government and its agencies, the loss of confidence in national identity and economic competitiveness". Within this reconstructed school context can be seen changes in the daily work of teachers. Teachers, as Lawn notes, "exist within a form of punitive corporation, focused entirely on competition and output". This should not surprise us. Education Policy does not operate autonomously, but is rather shaped within wider political structures, such as the state, and supranational political structures, as for example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In fact, it would be unusual if this did not occur. In a time of globalisation <sup>42</sup> of the economy, a new global educational consensus has emerged. What is now required are organisational arrangements adjusted to the production of clearly defined, "quantifiable" outcomes at the lowest cost (Lingard, 2000, p.84). Thus, we should expect that the state will attempt to

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<sup>41</sup> Here it is not argued that in the past teachers had absolute autonomy. This has always been restricted to an extent; what is now argued is that these restrictions have intensified.

<sup>42</sup> Globalisation can be defined as: "A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding." (Waters, 1995, p.3)

increase controls on the labour process of state employees such as teachers. Teaching, as Mahony and Hextall (2000, p.84) argue, “comes with a much stronger official frame around it”. This, according to them, means, “firmer definitions as to the purposes of teaching, clearer specifications of the what and how of teaching, more rigorous and assertive vetting and regulating procedures...”

Within all this, as Ball (2003, p.220) notices, “there is a high degree of uncertainty and instability...there is a flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that makes one continually accountable and constantly recorded”.

Thus, teachers are experiencing a restructuring of their work, namely, the *separation of conception from execution*, and facing the consequences of this restructuring, namely, deskilling. Apple’s explanation/ analysis of the process of separation from execution is quite clear <sup>43</sup>:

When complicated jobs are broken down into atomistic elements, the person doing the job loses sight of the whole process and loses control over his or her own labour, since someone outside the immediate situation now has greater control over both the planning and what is actually happening. (Apple, 1992, p.22, Apple, 2000, p. 116)

*Deskilling* is related to the separation of conception from execution, in that it can be seen as its outcome. As employees lose control over their own labour, their skills, which they have developed in previous years, are not used and consequently wither. Apple argues:

When individuals cease to plan and control a large portion of their own work, the skills essential to doing these tasks self-reflectively and well atrophy and are forgotten. (Apple, 1992, p.23, Apple, 2000, p. 117)

As a result, under the conditions of prescribed and standardised curricula, when the teachers’ role in planning their work and controlling their labour process is restricted, and they are deskilled, the relations in production, namely the relationships between teachers and the curriculum and teachers and their students, are affected and transformed.

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<sup>43</sup> The process Apple describes could hardly be seen as fully developed, because teachers’ work requires a degree, more or less, of autonomy for both relations of production and in production, in order to achieve production, because their “object” of work is other human beings, “human objects”.

There may be a deskilling process occurring in the case of teachers, but, on the other hand, a reskilling process is very likely to emerge in the case of head teachers. To be more specific, while the majority of teachers may be subject to losing aspects of control through the deskilling process, a small number of employees, such as head teachers, may be seen as reskilled, as those with power try to hold on to their influence. Hence, the skills required by teachers in order to plan, organize and present the curriculum are lost (deskilling of teachers) and appropriated by head teachers - another rank of educational hierarchy - (reskilling of head teachers) (Watkins, 1992, p. 22).

Thus, the process of centralisation of authority and state control over teachers' labour process through the tendency for the curriculum to become increasingly planned, standardised and prescribed at a central level, can increasingly be translated into a situation where teachers' control over their labour process and their autonomy to plan and carry out their daily teaching seem to be significantly transformed, in fact undermined, by being restricted. The case of prescribed and standardised curricula, for example, seems to impede teachers developing skills such as taking initiatives in the classroom and treating students according to their educational needs, demands and interests. In short, these transformations and interventions seem to have consequences for the teachers' ability to control their own labour process and the "products" of this process. The consequences of the interventions have two aspects: one on teachers and the other on students.

With the processes of standardisation of curricula and centralisation of control under way, the whole process of knowledge provision seems to be affected and the focus of teaching seems to be more centred on those elements of school knowledge that can be easily standardised and measured, such as exams, standardised tests, tests results. Another major effect of the restructuring of their job, besides that of deskilling, is the *intensification* of work.

The concept of intensification is drawn from general theories of the labour process, particularly as developed by Larson (1980, pp.131-175). According to Larson, *intensification represents one of the most tangible ways in which the work of*

*privileges of educated workers are eroded.* Discussion of the intensification of teachers' work draws extensively and often directly on Larson's broader analysis of the labour process (ibid).

In the work of Apple (1986) and Ball (1988), intensification is considered as one of the most tangible ways in which the working conditions of teachers have been eroded. More and more work has to be done; less and less time is available to do it. Intensification, he adds:

...leads people to "cut corners", so that only what is "essential" to the task immediately at hand is accomplished...quality is sacrificed for quantity. Getting done is substituted for work well done. (Apple, 1992, p.25, Apple, 2000, p. 119)

Intensification does not only have one dimension, that of "more work in less time", but it also has another, related to the previous one, that of the differences in the work done. In short, it is not only a matter of "quantity" of teaching, but also one of "quality". For example, in order to flourish, critical teaching requires, as Apple (1986, p.183) argues, "a floor of responsible *autonomy* under it." It cannot be developed within a context where the use of time is "policed". It needs time for reflection and, consequently, can hardly be developed within a context which prioritises "quantity against quality". It cannot be developed under the pressure of time which is limited and has to be used in a rationalised way. Expression of skills requires a relatively high degree of autonomy.

Intensification is particularly evidenced in teachers' work in the form of increasing subordination to an externally created and imposed apparatus of objectives, in-class assessments and accountability instructions. This, Apple states, has led to a proliferation of administrative tasks and the elimination of opportunities for more creative and imaginative work (Apple, 1989, 1992). He also points to the gendered nature of intensification<sup>44</sup> (1986).

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<sup>44</sup> He relates the gendered nature of intensification with the fact that women teachers often work in two sites - the school and home. When their work at school is being intensified, this might contribute to a reorganisation of the sexual division of labour in the domestic sphere. It could also be the case that women cope with the workload at school without being hindered by their role at home.



Thus, the tendency in many countries for the curriculum to become increasingly planned, systematised, standardised and prescribed at a central level, focused on competencies and measured by standardised tests, is part of the whole process of tightening the control over teachers' labour process. This means that the whole pattern (content, organisation, pacing, timing) of their teaching has to be set in accordance with specific guidelines of the Educational Authorities. Hence, the changing structures of the control exercised on teachers' labour process, through the introduction of prescribed curricula, signify a change in teachers' working conditions.

In particular, there is a transition in teachers' work, from a period where teachers could be responsible for organising their everyday teaching of the curriculum to one where this responsibility is someone else's duty. Those changes, related to changes of control over the curriculum, also affect pedagogy and assessment, because these three aspects of teaching cannot be separated and conceived independently of one another. This is because what has to be taught determines, to a large extent, the way you have to teach it and, consequently, the assessment of the work done.

For example, when time is limited and "policed", as Apple (1986, p.183) notes, teachers will look for the easiest way to present the curriculum, which may not be the most appropriate for their students' educational needs. They are "obliged" to develop skills such as the capacity to invent easy ways to reach a concrete outcome. This situation may result in feelings of stress, alienation and dissatisfaction as far as their classroom life is concerned, which in turn may affect their relationship with students, who may see them as simply executors of others' guidelines. As teachers' work is constantly predetermined by prescribed packages of curricula, more control will be exercised on their work and, consequently, a process of devaluation of their labour power is under way. In fact, as Apple (1986, p.180, Apple, 2000, p.118) indicates, "all these may have exactly the opposite consequences of what many authorities intend. Instead of professional teachers who care greatly about what they do and why they do it, we may have alienated executors of someone else's plans". All this may be translated into the view that teachers tend to constitute a pool of docile and cheap - because of deskilling - labour force, ready to serve whoever demands it, namely, the state, local authorities or the private sector.

Educational research presents us with interesting accounts of work and glimpses into the issue of teachers' proletarianisation. A study carried out in North America by the Boston Women Teachers Group has investigated the pattern of changes in work among women teachers, and found convincing evidence of increased control in a political context which blames teachers for national decline (Freedman, 1985). In addition, Densmore's work - two case studies of first year teachers in 1984 - suggests that teachers' working conditions are becoming more like those of industrial workers (Densmore, 1987). Sufficient evidence from ethnographic studies (Gintlin, 1980, cited in Apple, 1983, p.59, Smyth, 2000, pp 130-134) of the labour process of teaching points to the fact that where the curriculum was heavily based on a sequential list of behaviourally defined objectives, multiple worksheets on skills which the students were to complete, with pre-tests to measure "readiness" and "skill level" and 'post- tests' to measure "achievement" that were given often and regularly, the intensification of teacher work was quite visible.

Ozga and Lawn (1981), and Harris (1982) also identify deteriorating conditions of employment, citing, for example, loss of teacher autonomy through increasing accountability to the state and loss of job security and income. Lawn & Ozga argue that proletarianisation follows from the removal of skill from work, the exclusion of worker from the conceptual functions of work. They also recognise that there are problems in describing teachers as skilled workers and argue that "skill" is not only a technical term, denoting control over a complex process and involving an understanding of the process, but it is also a social term (Lawn & Ozga, 1988, p.89).

Skill, they claim, implies a relationship to the process of conception *and* execution, the strength -or weakness- of the relationship to these processes being demonstrated by the terms "skilled", "semi-skilled" and "unskilled". Hence, it is the very existence of a *relationship* to the process of conception which lies at the centre of the proletarianisation process. A non-relationship to the conception process, as far as the issues of content, organisation, pacing and timing of the curriculum are concerned, entails a proletarianisation process. But a non-relationship to the process of conception might also affect skills having to do with pedagogy. In other words, the key elements of pedagogy should not be seen as independent from the content,

organisation, pacing and timing of the curriculum; instead, they may be affected by those features of the curriculum. To be more specific, when we have, for example, prescribed and standardised curricula and pacing is predetermined, teachers have to use those methods that will allow them to finish their work within a specific period of time; there are no choices. This has implications for the way they teach, for pedagogy.

From the above-mentioned work of scholars who develop the proletarianisation thesis, proletarianisation is understood as a homogeneous tendency experienced by *all* teachers in advanced capitalist societies and is seen as the result of the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula. The only differentiated feature is “gender” (Apple, 1983). Teachers are supposed to experience their work either as men or as women. There is no discussion about possible variations in the way proletarianisation is conceived and understood by teachers themselves.

However, the absence of this discussion, we argue, is not a minor issue; on the contrary, it constitutes a vital part of the discussion of proletarianisation. Without this discussion the theoretical perspective developed on teachers’ proletarianisation is of relatively little theoretical value, in that it mainly focuses on the demands of capitalism for controlling teachers’ labour process and fails to consider the demands of capitalism for intensifying the control pressures on teachers’ labour process *in relation* to the structure of the labour process itself. More specifically, the labour process theory (Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; White, 1983; Apple, 1986; Lawn & Ozga, 1988; Carlson, 1992; Watkins, 1992), seems to define teachers’ labour process and its constitutive elements in a very simplistic way. It presents us with a labour process which consists of teachers and the curriculum, teachers as gendered social beings and the curriculum as prescribed and standardised.

Yet, as we discussed in section 2.7 (“Teaching as a labour process”), teachers’ labour process also involves students who share variations in their socio-cultural background, which can be translated into the fact that, even in cases where all teachers perceive the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula, the factor “students” which is not homogeneous could lead to variations in teachers’ understanding of the pressures and controls imposed on their labour process. In the

same direction, the labour process theory presents teachers' labour power as a relatively<sup>45</sup> homogeneous element of their labour process. But this is not helpful, either.

Teachers as a body of working people are characterised by differences in their labour power, differences concerning their subject of teaching, mainly in secondary education (specialisation), as well as their years of service (seniority). The fact, for example, that teachers in secondary education do not all teach the same subject, that they do differ as far as the issue of expertise is concerned and that their "audience" varies in terms of "cultural capital", might result in the processes and modalities of proletarianisation. These are the variations we will attempt to address.

In short, the theoretical discussion of the labour process theory leaves no room for any other parameters -except gender- which may possibly affect teachers' labour process. Thus, proletarianisation should be investigated in relation to teachers' relationship with their "objective" conditions of their work, namely, their means of production ("object" and "instruments") and relations in production. Teachers do not all share the same means of production. As we discussed above, the teachers' "object" of work is not uniform; students' cultural capital and dispositions towards knowledge vary, depending on the students' class origin, which is determined by their families' class location. Thus, "proletarianisation" needs to take into consideration the relationship developed between the means of production and the relations in production, which, in their totality, constitute teachers' labour process.

In addition, we need to be aware of the cross-national variations and differences in social, economic and historical contexts of particular countries, when we deal with processes, such as teachers' proletarianisation, taking place in advanced capitalist societies. By this we mean that proletarianisation might be seen as a process not exclusively resulting from the economic capitalist demands. It might well be identified beyond the *stricto sensu* economic demands of capitalism; it might result from state interventions related to the needs of capitalism, *as well as* political factors.

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<sup>45</sup> We say "relatively" because it does take into account the parameter of gender.

As such can be seen the state educational policies which could contribute, for example, to the reproduction of the concrete political/governmental scheme.

Thus, since teaching, as we discussed above, cannot be conceived as a highly homogeneous labour process - there are variations in teachers' labour power and their "object", i.e., students' socio-cultural background -, it is always necessary to undertake empirical work in order to identify main tendencies, variations and differences or possible similarities concerning the proletarianisation process.

In particular, by showing these main tendencies which pull teachers apart and de-homogenise their work and labour process we indicate that it is an important issue we raise about teachers' labour process which seems to have been overlooked in the way the Marxist literature has developed. Therefore, teachers' understandings of their work should not be assumed to be homogeneous and undifferentiated; instead, parameters such as those referred to above should be investigated. This will be the attempt of this study.

More specifically, the parameters which will be taken into consideration in relation to teachers' labour process are: students' *habitus* towards knowledge, and teachers' gender, specialisation and seniority. These will be discussed in the following sections.

### **2.9.1 Proletarianisation: Students' *habitus* towards knowledge**

Having discussed teachers' class, as the "experience of living men and women", we also have to take into consideration the students' socio-economic background which is related to the class location of their families. This determines, to a large extent, their cultural background or what Bourdieu calls their "cultural capital". The reason is that students play a vital role in teachers' labour process. As referred to above, teaching is, in essence, a *relationship* between teachers and students. Therefore, students constitute the "object" of teachers' labour process, the *sine qua non* factor for teachers' work. Teachers' work is inconceivable without their students.

As research reports indicate<sup>46</sup>, “students were the basic referents, as teachers talked about their schools, colleagues, classrooms, and commitment to teaching. Teachers focused on their students’ academic abilities, needs and interests, attitudes and backgrounds as they explained what they do in their classrooms...” (McLaughlin, Talbert & Phelan, 1990, cited in McLaughlin, 1993, p.81).

In particular, for an adequate analysis of teachers’ work, we have to take into account the two forms of students’ cultural capital, namely: the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; and the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).

The possession by students of the above cultural capital, either as dispositions, as far as knowledge is concerned, or as education resources, might facilitate teachers’ work, in that students come to school almost “ready” to listen to and engage with him/her when the reverse is the case, teachers have to exert much more effects and spend more time and energy, in short, to develop skills which will help students to be initiated in to the school environment. In short, “cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge, as part of students’ properties, should be seen and located within the conceptualization of the labour process, as part of the teachers’ means of production, as raw materials that teachers have to work on/with.

In particular, as Bernstein argues, “...the pacing of the knowledge (i.e. the rate of expected learning) is implicitly based upon the middle-class socialisation of the child. Middle-class family socialisation of the child is a hidden subsidy, in the sense that it provides both a physical and social environment which immensely facilitates, in diverse ways, school learning. *The middle-class child is oriented to learning almost anything...for the middle-class child is geared to learn; he may not like, or indeed approve of, what he learns, but he learns...*”(Bernstein, 1975, p.113, note 5, emphasis added). It follows from the above that teachers’ working experiences might be structured differently and according to their students’ socio-cultural background, which refers to different relationships to knowledge; for “schools respond to the cultural and linguistic capital of one group or class of individuals, not to those with

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<sup>46</sup> It is a research program on the school workplace conducted for the Centre for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching at Stanford University and aimed at understanding the diverse

who are both economically and culturally disenfranchised” (Apple, 1978, p. 38). As Connell (1982, p.188) notes, “there are differences in the way of life between social groups that make them more or less likely to generate educational ‘success’. The most influential has been the idea of deep-rooted social class differences in approaches to schooling- what are called ‘attitudes’, ‘values’, ‘expectations’ ”. For him and his co-authors the relationship between student and knowledge lies at the centre of the social relationships of schooling. (quoted in Hatcher, 2000, p. 187).

Based on class relationships and schooling the empirical work of a French sociologist of education, Bernard Charlot and his colleagues (1992), indicates that differences in academic achievement are related to different relationships to knowledge on the part of student. According to them middle-class students tended to give value to intellectual work both for intrinsic reasons-interesting in itself- and for extrinsic ones-find a good job. Working-class students tended to see learning more as a completion of tasks.(quoted in Hatcher, 2000, p. 189).

In short, all this mean that we cannot, as Riley (2002, p. 6) notices, “underestimate the importance of the interplay between teachers and pupils”.

Thus, the fact that teachers work with a range of qualitatively differentiated “objects” might mean that they perceive and understand “teaching”, as a lived experience, differently, depending on the “objective” context and conditions which constitute their labour process, and this includes students’ cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge. Consequently, the differentiations and variations concerning the teachers’ “object” of their labour process are likely to be translated into differentiated subjective understandings of their labour process.

### **2.9.2 Proletarianisation: Teachers’ Gender**

We cannot fully understand teaching and the curriculum without placing it in a context where, apart from class, we also integrate gender. Teaching, it always has to be remembered, is, for the most part, mainly in elementary education, carried out by women. As Apple observes:

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contexts in which teachers work and their significance for teaching and learning.

in every occupational category, *women* are more apt to be proletarianised than men. This could be because of sexist practices of recruitment and promotion, the general tendency to care less about the conditions under which women labor... (Apple, 1983, p.54).

In schools women play a major role as teachers. There is a sexual division of labour predicated on a power relationship which is about subordination of women to men. Thus, gender oppression is central to an understanding of the ways in which the labour process of teachers is structured and controlled. Central to the understanding of the gendered dimension of the labour process of teaching is a ubiquitous patriarchal ideology, working in a number of subtle ways. For example, it has constructed notions of masculinity and femininity which undergird the external and internal education labour markets, as well as material practices in education systems. Teaching has been constructed as 'women's work' because it involves the caring and nurturing of children, which is the activity women are engaged in in private spheres (Smyth, 2000, p.35-36).

Since teachers are primarily women, we must also look beyond school to get a fuller understanding of the impact of the introduction of standardised and prescribed curricula. We must not forget that women teachers very often work in two sites: at school and at home. This could mean that they are busier compared to men and, consequently, women might experience prescribed and standardised curricula differently from men teachers. Women may not experience prescribed and predetermined curricula as restricting their autonomy; on the contrary, they may perceive them as facilitating their daily teaching process, because they provide them with directions and guidelines, a well-defined framework within which they can work. In short, they might see the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula in a positive light.

In addition, the examination of teaching work from a gendered perspective leads us, as Ozga (1988, p. 332-333) argues, to suggest that the idea of proletarianisation has certain distinct implications for women teachers. The separation of management from the teaching force in schools, an established policy trend, means that the hierarchy of authority in schools will be masculine and predominantly male. Thus,



since the factor “gender”, as a social category, contains specific social meanings and signifies concrete social processes, it cannot be ignored in a study of teachers’ work.

To recapitulate, the focus on teachers as agents of capitalist reproduction which only considers the macro-societal effects of schooling rather than micro-processes taking place within schools seems inadequate for understanding teachers’ work. What is needed is to examine teachers’ concrete work-sites, within specific social and historical contexts, in order to grasp and understand their work proceedings, the forces and relations of- and in- production and their perceptions about them. It is through this approach that a better understanding of teachers’ role in the reproduction of social relations could be achieved.

### **2.9.3 Proletarianisation: Teachers’ Specialisation**

Another parameter, besides students’ social-cultural background and gender, which has to be considered when theorising about and focusing on “proletarianisation and teachers’ labour process” is teachers’ specialisation. It is a parameter which may also differentiate teachers’ perceptions and understandings of their labour process and of their daily work in general.

A teachers’ teaching subject could be seen and approached as constituting a skill which is a vital part of their labour power. Teachers are employed by the state, the local authorities or the owners of private schools, not, in general, to teach in any abstract term, but in order to teach particular subjects, and, more specifically, a certain syllabus which forms part of the whole subject. This is an aspect of their labour power which differentiates them in their teaching practice. It is an issue which, unfortunately, as we mentioned in the previous section, is non-theorised and underdeveloped within the labour process approach to teachers’ labour process (Ozga & Lawn, 1981; Harris, 1982; White, 1983; Apple, 1986; Lawn & Ozga, 1988; Carlson, 1992; Watkins, 1992).

To be more specific, in the literature on “teachers as workers in a labour process” we cannot, unfortunately, identify any development and elaboration on the above

dimension of teaching. The labour process theory in education, influenced by Braverman, approaches teachers as mainly classed and gendered actors, as discussed above in section 2.9 on the proletarianisation thesis. The nature of the teaching subject is not the same for all. Generally speaking, we can distinguish between two categories of subjects: the analytical and the empirical-descriptive ones. History, for example, can be seen as an example of the former category and Mathematics of the latter. In the first case, in order for History to be adequately and properly taught, there should be enough time for teaching, discussion, for development of critical views, for debate, for using resources, for research. It may require visits to particular historical places and museums. Thus, it might be said that it is “time-” and “place-” consuming. History, as a curriculum subject, can be prescribed, but at the same time it is difficult to be taught without missing its essence and its dynamism.

When History is prescribed, which means that specific units have to be taught within a limited period of time, this may mean, for example, that there is not enough time to organise educational visits to historical places, museums etc. When strictly prescribed, History may be nothing more than a sterile description of historical facts. Located within the labour process approach, teachers’ specialisation, as mentioned in the beginning of this section, could be seen as an element incorporated in their labour power, their capacity to work and, in particular, it can be seen as part of their skills. The state “buys” teachers’ labour power in order to perform its goal which is “to teach students”, for example History or Mathematics.

In other words, the nature of teachers’ teaching subject could also, along with the “students’ cultural capital” and demands, influence a specific set of teachers’ energies and practices having to do with the use of the means of production, such as the curriculum, and, more specifically, the aspects of pacing and timing of their work. This would shape a specific set of relations in production which refers to those relationships developed within the production process, for example, with students.

Thus, for a teacher who teaches History, the introduction of a highly prescribed and standardised curriculum in History might mean that he/she is not able to work as they would like and expect to and this may consequently lead to a process of deskilling

which, in turn, results in the development of strong feelings of dissatisfaction, stress and alienation.

In the case of Mathematics, the subject, as it is taught in secondary education, has more to do with material which takes the form of mathematical formulae and exercises and less the form of theoretical discussion and critical thought, which is done in Higher education, so skills which have to do with developing discussion and critical thought are not required. To the extent that it is a subject with a high degree of standardised content (equations, models, formulae etc.), a prescribed type of curriculum may not be perceived by Mathematicians as restricting their autonomy, at least in the same degree as in the case of History, and, consequently, the proletarianisation process of Mathematicians may not be comparable to that of teachers of History.

#### **2.9.4 Proletarianisation: Teachers' Seniority**

In addition, another feature which has to be taken into consideration when studying the issue of teachers' labour process is "seniority", incorporated in teachers' labour power. Teachers have been trained to teach certain things and not others, in which case we talk about teachers' "specialisation". Also they are capable of teaching things in specific ways, depending on their years of service, in which case we talk about "seniority". The importance of this factor lies in the fact that the amount of experience carried by a teacher might be translated into different ways of coping with issues such as prescribed curricula and restriction of autonomy. It may be the case that the conditions of teaching progressively drain teachers of energy and enthusiasm as they carry on over many years (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986). The data show that stress and burnout are phenomena that are becoming increasingly problematic. More specifically, the data on the incidence of stress and burnout in the teaching profession reveal that in Western and Eastern countries about 60% to 70% of all teachers show stress symptoms and at least 30% of all teachers show distinct burnout symptoms (Vandenberghe, R., & Huberman, A., 1999, p. 38).

Thus, teachers who have many years of experience might develop feelings of tiredness and indifference, so a prescribed curriculum may not be experienced as a negative feature affecting their autonomy. However, the reverse might also be the case; experienced teachers might be less susceptible to control, it might be easier for them to develop forms of resistance to restrictions of their autonomy, as their experience may help them to move with more familiarity and more confidence within the labour process, compared with less experienced ones. This might also be explained by the fact that the experienced teachers may tend to ignore the curriculum's prescriptions as a refusal of the bureaucratic mechanisms which try to impose the "truth" upon their work. Thus, feeling more confident with respect to their professional identity, they may find it easy to react to central pressures and controls.

All this means that the parameter of teachers' "seniority" should be taken into account and equally investigated as that of "specialisation", when studying teachers' labour process and the issue of proletarianisation, because it constitutes, as in the case of teachers' "specialisation", an element of teachers' labour power which, in its turn, forms an integral component of teachers' labour process, as part of their means of production.

To conclude, in this chapter we have developed the theoretical basis for establishing our specific hypotheses and the empirical research which are presented in the following chapters. More specifically, we argue that the approach of our study of teachers' labour process requires that "objective" aspects of their labour process - such as the structural framework within which this takes place and the "subjective" perceptions and experiences of the actors-teachers - should not be considered in isolation, but as a duality within the framework of the forces of production and relations of- and in- production.

Following this line of thought, we argue that teachers' labour process and the proletarianisation thesis, developed by the labour process theorists, can adequately be studied within the Marxist perspective of the labour process theory, but only if it takes into consideration the "object" of teachers' labour process, namely *students*, the variations on their "*cultural capital*" and *habitus* towards knowledge and the

parameters - besides *gender* - which shape teachers' labour power, namely, their *specialisation* and *seniority*. Those parameters constitute the structural framework within which teachers' work is realised and simultaneously they constitute the foundation for the development of teachers' "subjective" perceptions and understandings, as far as their labour process is concerned. Taking this perspective into account, in the next chapter we will present the Greek case under the light of the conceptual and theoretical framework we discussed above.

## Chapter 3: The Greek case

### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we developed the theoretical and conceptual context within which this piece of empirical study will be located. This is the framework of the labour process theory and the proletarianisation thesis which is inscribed within this theoretical model. Having discussed and criticised the problematic points of this theoretical approach to teachers' work, we argue that the labour process theory can help us to grasp and understand the changes taking place in teachers' work in advanced capitalist countries, as well as in more peripheral countries such as Greece.

To be more specific, we aim to demonstrate that the educational changes which took place in Greece with the introduction of prescribed curricula, called "Desmes", should be seen as forces which contributed to a teachers' proletarianisation process, in that they led to their labour process being controlled by the educational authorities in order to produce a particular outcome which, in this case, is students' preparation for the Higher education entrance exams. As a result, we argue, teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process were restricted. More specifically, in this chapter we will attempt to demonstrate the changes which took place in the case of teachers' labour process in Greece, as this was structured by the Socialist Government of P.A.S.O.K during the period 1983-1999<sup>47</sup>, with the introduction of Desmes.

In particular, the aim of this chapter is to present a description of the policy for the prescribed curricula, Desmes, and then locate teachers' labour process, as this was shaped by Desmes, within the Marxist theoretical and conceptual framework developed in the previous chapter, where we presented and discussed in detail four issues which we consider might affect the shaping of teachers' labour process. These are: students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, teachers' gender, specialisation and seniority. The purpose of this presentation is to mark out the interventions by the Ministry of Education which, as it is argued in this study,

contributed to restricting the range of teachers' autonomy and developed tighter forms of control over teachers' labour process than had previously existed. In order to meet the above objective, the chapter is structured as follows:

In the first two sections we present the broader policies of New Democracy (N.D), the Liberal party, which is the predecessor of P.A.S.O.K in power. Then we address P.A.S.O.K's policy concerning the system of selection for entrance to Higher education through Desmes. This is because Desmes can be seen as part of a system of selection for University entrance exams to Tertiary education. The rationale for this presentation is that it is necessary as a first step to describe the policies adopted by the two parties, especially that of P.A.S.O.K, in order to look thereafter at the effects they have had on teachers' work in Lycea.

The last section is devoted to teachers' labour process as this is shaped and structured by P.A.S.O.K's policy on the system of selection for entrance to Higher education, namely the system of Desmes. Before we refer to P.A.S.O.K's policy, we will first present the broader historical context within which P.A.S.O.K's policies were implemented, as these, we believe, are not totally unrelated to the previous ones, those of the Liberal Party (N.D) in the period between 1974 and 1981. We say "not totally unrelated" because P.A.S.O.K did not introduce any radical changes in the system of selection for entrance to Higher educational institutions. As Kassotakis (1994, p.109) indicates, among a number of reforms introduced by the P.A.S.O.K socialist government is: "the modification of the selection system for entrance to Higher education institutions..."(my emphasis).

Hence, there was a modification of the existing system and not some kind of fundamental, radical change. In a sense, P.A.S.O.K's policy is located within the broader framework designed by New Democracy. Thus, we could say that there is some kind of continuity in that both parties had some common objectives such as, for example, meeting the demand for equal opportunities and curbing private education, or para-education, namely *frontesteria*.

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<sup>47</sup> Except the year 1989 when the government in power consisted of two ideological streams, the

In sum, what P.A.S.O.K tried to do was to simplify and loosen the previous pattern of the selection system for entrance to Higher education. While in the case of New Democracy the preparation for University entrance exams lasted two years (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Lyceum), P.A.S.O.K changed this to one year (3<sup>rd</sup> year of Lyceum). However, the important thing is that in both cases the curriculum for the entrance exams - named "Panhellenic" by N.D and "General" by P.A.S.O.K- was the same as the one which had to be taught by teachers of Lyceum. This is not a negligible issue; on the contrary, it is a major one in a study of teachers' work. It is important because there was a correspondence between what teachers had to teach at schools- through Desmes- and what was required by the entrance exams. Consequently, teachers' work could not ignore the exams requirements; on the contrary, it can be said that it was the exams requirements that determined and shaped teachers' labour process.

### **3.2. The system of entrance to Higher education according to New Democracy's policy (1035/1980 Act)**

The year 1974 marks the return to democratic government. New Democracy, the conservative party, came to power and sought to implement its liberal educational policy. After the fall of dictatorship the political scene was very different. As Vergopoulos (1986, p.81) observes:

in the political domain, it has to be noted, a new situation appeared for the country: a new political system which, for the first time in history, respects and upholds the principle of succession in power as well as the democratic political rules.

The westernisation of political life, as Bouzakis (1995, p.27) notices, also leads to a westernisation of educational policies and educational policies tend to be similar to those of other western democracies. Within this context, one can say that it was felt that most aspects of the educational system were in need of improvement: the curriculum, technical and vocational education, school facilities, the organisation and administration of schools and the quality of teaching.

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"Left" and the "Right" and the years 1990-1993 where in power was N.Democracy("Right")



However, the transformation of the system for entrance to Higher education took four years (1979-80) to be legislated. Before 1979-80 entrance to Higher education was based on written entrance exams where the questions set by the Central Board for Entrance Exams<sup>48</sup> derived from the syllabus which was taught in the three years of Lyceum (Kyridis, 1997, p.196, emphasis added). This feature, we think, is the most crucial one, because, as we will see later, in the case of Desmes the scope of the syllabus examined gradually became very narrow.

The government of New Democracy legislated a new system for entrance to Higher education (1035/1980 Act and Presidential decree 298/1980) called "Panhellenic Exams". We believe a further description of the system is necessary, although it contains some technical details, because then the system of Desmes introduced by P.A.S.O.K. can be better understood.

Hence, with the Panhellenic exams, in the second and third classes of Lyceum students had to take two sets of subjects: common (core) and electives. The elective subjects fell under two categories: a) Humanities (Ancient Greek, Latin and History) and b) Mathematics and Science (Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry). All electives, except Latin, were also included among the common subjects. They were thus supposed to provide deeper and wider knowledge in the same discipline. At the end of the second and third year of Lyceum students sat for specially held (Panhellenic) examinations in the elective subjects, plus Composition. This took place in a Panhellenic scale. In addition, they sat exams at school level in the core areas for the usual purposes of promotion from the second to the third class and for graduation.<sup>49</sup> The exams questions were related to the syllabus taught in the second year, for the exams taking place at the end of the second year, and to the syllabus taught in the third year, for the exams taking place at the end of the third year. Thus, the basic new feature in this system of entrance exams to Higher education was the double exams which students had to take.

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<sup>48</sup> This board consisted of professors, teachers in secondary education and administrative personnel of the Ministry of Education.

<sup>49</sup> According to this policy, selection into Higher education was based on: a) the candidate's Higher education preference and b) a composite index derived from the sum of: i) the average mark at the end of the second class of Lyceum, ii) the average mark in the Lyceum school-leaving certificate, and iii) the marks earned in the national examinations, and all these multiplied by a particular coefficient.

The rationale for the above policy was that there were no additional<sup>50</sup> and external examinations. The old system of entrance examinations, an external method of selection was abolished. Now entry into Higher education was based on national examinations which were part of the Lyceum exams, as the exams syllabus was only the two years' taught syllabus (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year of Lyceum and not all the three years of Lyceum). Previously, questions in the university entrance examinations could have been drawn from the whole syllabus of the three years of Lyceum. The government believed that with the system of Panhellenic exams the chance of "haphazard entrance" would be minimised. This is because selection for Higher education would no longer be based on the marks received in four three-hour written examinations conducted during a period of four to eight days, but students now had two examinations instead of one. Also, it was thought that the role of frontesteria (para-education) would be limited, because the state school could prepare students for entering Higher education and, consequently, the demand for equal educational opportunities would be met.

Thus, the above paragraph outlines the main reasons for introducing the said system of selection for entrance to Higher education (Panhellenic exams). What was not, however, taken into account was the possible implications the system could have on the function of Lyceum and, consequently, on teachers' work. The Lyceum and teachers' work within it seem to have developed a relationship of dependence on Higher education. The fact that the work done in Lycea became part of the Panhellenic exams marked the beginning of the loss of the Lyceum and teachers' autonomy.

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<sup>50</sup> The situation before was that the Higher education entrance exams were external to the school. There were the Lyceum exams for getting the school-leaving certificate and separate exams for entering Higher education with a very broad syllabus tested (for entering Higher education), derived from everything taught in the three years of Lyceum.

### **3.3 The system of entrance to Higher education according to PA.SO.K's policy (General exams) (1351/1983 Act)**

PA.SO.K's educational policy, like that of New Democracy's, was "a new education which abolishes the barriers<sup>51</sup> ...which creates the free-thinking and socially responsible citizen... which secures the wide participation of the popular strata, as well as the participation of students in the planning and administration of education". Also, in the same text, "education is a matter of the social whole...private education is abolished." (Declaration, September 3rd 1974, p.17).

The government, as indicated in the Introduction of the Prefatory Memorandum of the design of the new Education Act, (1566/85 Act), considers education a national issue. Not only is education an investment but it also constitutes an outcome and an end in itself for the individual. More specifically, we read in the Prefatory Memorandum: "A fundamental view penetrating all stages of the education system is that education is a concern of the state..." (Bouzakis, 1995, p.269). It is important to bear this in mind because, as this study argues, it is exactly this belief that was undermined by the introduction of the Desmes system. We say that the idea of education as a public good was undermined because the system of Desmes contributed to the empowerment of frontesteria and, consequently, the disempowerment of state education. As we will show in detail later in this chapter, the teachers' labour process was affected by the empowerment of frontesteria because the preparatory character of Desmes for the entrance to Higher education exams (General exams) restricted teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process and turned the state school into, as Kyridis (1997, p. 230) terms it, a "public frontistirio". Thus, it is ironic that a policy which was designed and introduced by a socialist government in order to combat para-education eventually contributed to its flourishing.

Within this spirit, the PA.SO.K government introduced the post-Lyceum preparatory centres, which constituted an innovation, in that there were no such centres before.

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<sup>51</sup> Barriers: it refers to the problems facing students from lower socio-economic strata for entering Higher education.

Their aim was to prepare Lyceum-graduates who had failed to enter Higher education to re-sit for the entrance exams without paying fees. It was a social measure which was aimed at helping students from lower socio-economic strata to be more successful in their exams.

As mentioned above, one of the changes which took place in education under PA.SO.K was the modification of the selection system for the entrance to Higher education institutions (1351/1983 Act). The previous system, that of Panhellenic examinations, was considered by the government as problematic and thus: "the government decided to abolish it because its implementation had many serious deficiencies/disadvantages, such as the increase of para-education (frontesteria), the degradation of the role of the state school, problems in its proper operation, an anti-pedagogic provision of knowledge with the parallel and simultaneous teaching of basic (core subjects) and specialised (electives) ones, the economic drain of the families, stress..." (Prefatory Memorandum of the 1351/83 Act).

As is clear from the aims of the Act, as these were described in the Prefatory Memorandum, PA.SO.K's education reform can be characterised as ambitious, aiming at solving many educational problems. Among the aims of the reform, as summarised by Kassotakis (1996, p.41), was the following:

... decrease of Lyceum's dysfunction by limiting the General exams only to the third class.

Thus, it seems, according to the government, that the problem of Lyceum's dysfunction was related to the amount of years devoted to the preparation for the entrance exams. Instead of two years, which was the case under New Democracy, it became one year. It could not be foreseen that the problematic function of the Lyceum would be continued and intensified through the Desmes system, as the preparation for entrance exams was restricted to one year and the relationship between school and Higher education remained through the General exams.

In general, as Kassotakis argues, although a large number of measures were taken by the government, "in practice, the new system is facing many difficulties. The anchyloses/sclerosis (dysfunctions) of the education system created by previous

years, its chronic weaknesses and its deficiencies in various sectors (for example teachers' training), the standard of studies in Lyceum, the dominant interests of para-education and the high social demand for Higher education all distorted, in practice, the good intentions of the initiators of changes, reducing them to romantic ambitions." (1996, p.41)

From the above criticisms, it seems to be believed that the new system did not work because it faced problems and difficulties which all come from factors outside the school. However, critics refer to the anchyloses/ sclerosis, weaknesses and deficiencies of the educational system in a very general way and they do not explain what is defined as weaknesses and deficiencies and of what kind these are. They indicate and identify, without any further explanation, the problems of Lyceum as the quality of studies, the interests of para-education and the high social demand for Higher education. In a sense, it is thought that the system itself had no deficiencies, the intentions were good, in short, everything was right except for all the above-mentioned factors. This reasoning, we argue, is not correct, because it blames and attributes all the problems the system faced only to factors external to the system of Desmes. As this study will attempt to show, the dysfunction of Lyceum, in practice, was mainly the result of the development of a close relationship between Lyceum and Higher education.

At this point it is worth mentioning that the degradation of the role of the state school and the enhanced role of frontesteria, which were the reasons why the PA.SO.K government proposed a change in the selection system for entrance to Higher education, ultimately became the major problems caused by the new system which was introduced, that is, the system of Desmes.

The government seemed to believe that with the new selection system they would offer proper preparation and a fair assessment of the candidates who - their opportunities unlimited - would be able, at any time, to be prepared for their entrance into Higher education. The 1351/83 Act introduced a new system of selection for Higher education, namely, the system of the General exams, instead of the Panhellenic exams or, as it is known, the system of Desmes (groups of specialised subjects). According to this system, the subjects of the third class of the Lyceum

were categorised into two groups: subjects of general education (Core subjects) and the preparatory subjects for Higher education, divided into four groups, four Desmes. Students had to choose one group at the beginning of the academic year in order to sit for the General exams. Each group of subjects (Desmi) gave the opportunity of entering a specific category of Higher Schools of University status.

1. The first group (Desmi) led to: University Departments of Science and Technology and Higher Technological Institutes. The subjects examined were: Composition, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.
2. The second group led to: Medical and Biology Schools. The subjects examined were: Composition, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.
3. The third group led to: Departments of Philosophy, Law, Modern/Ancient Literature and Education. The subjects examined were: Composition, Ancient Greek, Latin and History.
4. The forth group led to: Departments of Social and Political Sciences, Business, Economics, Administration and Mass Media. The subjects examined here were: Composition, Mathematics, History and Sociology (this was replaced by Political Economy in 1994).

In addition, there was a fifth group (Desmi) until 1988 that enabled those not interested in entering university to get the school-leaving certificate. Students were not obliged to sit the examinations in order to graduate.

Thus, the timetable for the final year of the Lyceum can be presented as following (Kyridis, 1997, p.230, footnote):

Subjects	Hours			
Core subjects	per week			
Religion	1			
History	2			
Philosophy	2			
Political Science	1			
Foreign language	2			
Physical education	2			
Total	10			
Desmes- subjects	Branches/Desmes			
	A	B	C	D
Modern language and literature	4	4	4	4
Mathematics	8	4	-	8
Physics	5	5	-	-
Chemistry	3	3	-	-
Biology	-	4	-	-
Ancient Greek(language and literature)	-	-	8	-
Latin	-	-	4	-
History	-	-	4	4
Sociology/Pol. Economy	-	-	-	4
Total	20	20	20	20

Another change which took place in 1988 was that the overall marks of the first and second classes of Lyceum no longer counted by 25% in the total score for entrance to university. The government's justification for this decision was the elimination of the distorting effect the examination process had on the curriculum (Gouvias, 1998,

p.312). Although with the above change an attempt was made to loosen the relationship between the Lyceum and university entrance exams, there was still dependence between the two, in that the Lyceum continued to play the preparatory role for the exams requirements. In short, what is tested in the examination process is what was taught in Lyceum (Desmes). The two continue to be a kind of communicating vessels. Thus, the work done by teachers in Lyceum is submitted to and inscribed within those needs and requirements and the whole process of their teaching is developed, controlled and evaluated according to this objective.

Moreover, until 1988 there was no time limit, that is, a student could try to enter Higher education as many times as h/she wanted. From 1988 onwards the calculation of marks was limited to the two years following a candidate's first participation in the General exams. This measure was part of the government's intention, as mentioned before, to make the system of selection easier and more flexible compared to that of New Democracy's. Apparently, the underlying view was to help pupils from non-privileged social backgrounds.

In addition, as far as the syllabus of the General exams is concerned, this was strictly determined by the Ministry every November, after proposals by the Pedagogic Institute, and came from the syllabus taught in the third class *only*. This point clearly shows the Ministry's direct intervention in the work done in Lycea. The very fact that the syllabus for the General exams was the one taught in the third class only indicates that the school is intensely exam-oriented and is consequently becoming, to a large extent, a preparatory centre, a "public frontistirio" (Kyridis, 1997, p.230).

The above was also the case with New Democracy's system of the Panhellenic exams, but not the same as the system which existed before the Panhellenic exams. Before New Democracy the syllabus for the entrance exams was that of the exam subjects across the three years of Lyceum. It included everything scheduled to be taught in Lyceum, irrespective of whether, for example, some schools had enough time to finish the syllabus. This is a significant difference because it signals an era where the Lyceum loses its autonomy in relation to Higher education entrance and becomes a preparatory centre for the entrance exams. This fact, in itself, we argue, constitutes the degradation of the last year of Lyceum into an examining centre – a



frontistirio. Locating the preparation for entrance exams within the Lycea signaled the empowerment of the preparatory-frontistirialistic logic of the state school. In other words, we have witnessed the transformation of a certain form of school - an educational unit - into a model of school-frontistirio. Here, by saying "educational" unit we are not expressing any kind of evaluative view as far as "education" is concerned. We are simply stressing the transformative process and the transfer of power, from teachers at state schools to teachers at frontesteria, a fact which cannot leave teachers' labour process untouched.

### **3.4 Teachers' labour process**

Before approaching teachers' work process, we will outline the context within which teachers' work takes place by briefly looking back and stressing the distinctive character of the system of Desmes for teachers' work experiences. The distinctiveness of the system of Desmes lies in the fact that the work done in Lyceum is directly related and connected to the requirements of the Higher education entrance exams.

First of all, we have to make it clear that the relationship between Secondary and Tertiary education is not a recent phenomenon. Before Desmes there was also a connection between the two, but this was very indirect and loose, whereas the introduction of the system of Desmes meant that it became direct, concrete and tight. This closer connection between Lyceum and Tertiary education started with New Democracy's policy of selection for Higher education, which defined that what was examined in the Panhellenic exams derived from the syllabus taught in the last two years of Lyceum. Before New Democracy's policy (1979-80), the Secondary and Tertiary education sectors were also connected, but this relationship was not the same as that of Desmes. Before the Panhellenic exams system, the syllabus tested was drawn from all (three) years of Lyceum. In other words, it was not located in a specific year, so the aim was not the preparation for university entrance exams. Consequently, teachers' work in the Lyceum was not inscribed within the needs and requirements of university entrance exams and they could feel more autonomous, we argue, compared to those who teach Desmes.

As a result, the effects this close connection had on the function of Lyceum in general and on teachers' work in particular are not the same. It is the system of Desmes, as it is argued in this study, that moulds and structures teachers' work almost exclusively in order to meet the requirements of university entrance exams.

More specifically, with the last two education reforms, namely, N.Democracy's and PA.SO.K.'s, there has developed a direct and strong association between Secondary and Tertiary education. This can be inferred from the fact that the Lyceum has been adjusted to the requirements of the entrance exams (Panhellenic or General). What is required by the General exams is exactly what is taught in Lyceum. This situation is highly problematical because all the emphasis is placed on the exams and the teachers' as well as the students' interest is confined to and exhausted in the preparation for them. Students are interested only in the subjects in which they will take exams and tend to neglect others. It is only Desmes-subjects and only a specified syllabus of the third year which is examined in the entrance exams (Genikes/General). Thus, the selective preparatory function of Lyceum is very clearly defined. This, we argue, makes the connection between Lyceum and Higher education tighter, accompanied by tighter forms of control by the educational authorities, and has created restrictions on teachers' autonomy, on issues such as the pace and sequence of teaching. In short, teachers' labour process is now governed by the requirements of the university entrance exams.

Thus, although before 1980 the Lyceum played a certain role as far as the preparation for entrance exams is concerned, this preparation was not located within a specific period of time, namely, the first, second or third year of Lyceum, as is the case of Desmes which only focus on the third year. In other words, the whole of the Lyceum experience had a contribution to the preparation, because the exams syllabus was drawn from the whole syllabus of the Lyceum. In the case of Desmes, almost all the work done in the third year has to do with the entrance exams. In the case of the 1980 Act, this was carried out within the last two classes of Lyceum, while in PA.SO.K.'s case within only the last year. Thus, we have a concentration of the process of

preparation since this is restricted within one year. Consequently, teachers' work is being intensified <sup>52</sup>.

In the case of P.A.S.O.K.'s reform, which has been the focus of the study, there has been a very concrete, direct relationship between Secondary and Tertiary education and this was realised through the dominance of Desmes which play the preparatory role for the university entrance exams.

To sum up, before 1980 the Lyceum had a very loose relationship to Tertiary education and this was reflected on the structure of the curriculum which did not have any direct relationship to the requirements of the entrance exams. The syllabuses taught were not identical to the syllabus and demands of the university entrance exams. But this relationship changed significantly and signaled a decisive shift, first with N.Democracy's measures and then more sharply with P.A.S.O.K.'s reform. P.A.S.O.K probably designed this system in order to facilitate university entrance for those students coming from non-privileged socio-economic groups. This policy could be justified by the fact that P.A.S.O.K at that time, as a socialist movement, wanted to satisfy the great demand for Higher education, wanted to make the dream of the less privileged for Higher education possible and achievable.

However, what emerged was a kind of relationship between the Lyceum and Tertiary education which could not be stronger, in that the Lyceum played the role of provider of preparation for Tertiary education. It is a relationship of dependence of the Lyceum on Tertiary education. The difference between the two policies was that in P.A.S.O.K.'s case the span of time for preparation was limited to one year, the last year of the Lyceum.

Hence, by transferring the preparation for the entrance exams from frontesteria to the Lyceum and by identifying the syllabus of the exams with that taught at schools, the Ministry aimed at making the whole process of selection accessible to all students, regardless of their economic and cultural capital. The economic burden of

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<sup>52</sup> Intensification, as Apple argues, "is one of the most tangible ways in which the working conditions of teachers have been eroded...it leads people to 'cut corners', so that only what is 'essential' to the task *immediately* at hand is accomplished." (Apple, 1992, p.25)

frontesteria on poor people was supposed to be lifted, because the preparation for the entrance exams would take place within Lycea. The issue of students' differentiated socio-cultural background was attempted to be neutralised, since PA.SO.K's system "is aimed at a proper preparation and fair assessment of all candidates, who with unlimited opportunities will be able, at any time of their school, student or professional life to be prepared and assessed for their entrance to Tertiary education" (Introductory Report of the 1351/1983 Act, *On students' entrance to Tertiary education.*).

This preparatory function of the Lyceum is clearly assumed and reflected in the structure of the timetable. As we can see from the diagram above, the timetable of the 3rd class of Lyceum is structured around two axes. The first one is Desmes-subjects, which are subjects required by the General exams for students to enter Tertiary education. The second axis is the Core subjects, having a broader and more general educational role, namely, to give students general knowledge and culture. Thus, the Desmes-subjects can be said to play a preparatory role in entry to universities, whereas Core subjects play a more cultural-socialising role. This can easily be inferred from the fact that Desmes-subjects consist solely of the subjects examined at entrance exams.

However, as it is clear from the diagram (p.93), the two axes of subjects are not equally represented: Desmes cover 20 hours of teaching while Core subjects only 10 hours. This clearly indicates that the time and energy devoted to Desmes is significantly more, which can be translated into a primacy of Desmes over Core subjects. Consequently, the Lyceum's (3rd class) dominant role is the preparation for the General exams. Moreover, the privileged position of Desmes-subjects arises from the fact that they are usually taught in the first four hours of the school timetable - as some kind of unwritten rule - because then the students' mind is clear and it is easier to attend courses. In sum, Desmes-subjects are given priority.

In addition, the two groups of subjects (Core/Desmes) are well insulated from each other. There is a clear differentiation, between the two categories of subjects, as far as their function is concerned. Desmes-subjects, as it was said, aim at preparing

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students for the university entrance exams, while Core-subjects aim at contributing to students' socio-cultural development, in short, at offering them general education. Desmes have a specialised purpose while Core subjects have a general one. There is a clear-cut insulation and boundary maintenance between the two groups of subjects, in that each one is supposed to be performing a distinct function and have a distinct aim.

For example, History is taught both in the Desmes-subjects group and in the Core-subjects group. The two "Histories" have a different aim. In the case of Desmes, the aim is for teachers to prepare students in the syllabus of History examined in the university entrance exams, whereas in the case of Core-subjects History is not examined in the university entrance exams. To this we want to add that the subjects are not only clearly insulated, but they are also not equitable. Desmes cover the most part of the timetable, 20 hours per week, while Core subjects only 10 hours per week. This means that the supremacy of Desmes and, consequently, of the preparatory role of the Lyceum, have become a reality.

Now, let us try to describe the specificities of the teachers' labour process in Greece. Having in mind the above educational context within which teachers' work is located, and, more specifically, the relationship between Lyceum and Tertiary education, we can now look at the way teachers' work is being structured and affected by the introduction of the system of Desmes.

This system structured a new relationship between Lyceum and Tertiary education which is, in fact, a tighter one. It is exactly this tight relationship of the Lyceum to Higher education that has also affected teachers' work and structured a labour process which, as we argue, is characterised by a loss of the Lyceum's autonomy as an education level and, consequently, restricted teachers' autonomy and developed tighter control over their work processes.

In this context, the aim of this study is to argue that the system of Desmes has had serious effects on teachers' labour process. In particular, it has resulted in changes in their work related to increasing restrictions of their autonomy on issues such as pace and sequence, and in the control of their work by educational authorities. It should be

stressed at this point that our intention is not to argue that there was a “golden age” before the introduction of Desmes, as far as the issue of teachers’ autonomy is concerned. In fact, what we will try to argue is that with the system of Desmes, teachers’ autonomy was restricted, as far as the issues of organisation, pacing and timing of their teaching are concerned. This is because their teaching work is subject to control and restrictions which are related to the particular aim of Desmes, namely, the preparation for the Higher education exams. This was not the case before, because the objective “preparation for entrance to Higher education exams” did not form part of the Lyceum’s focus. It was gradually brought about with New Democracy’s policy (Panhellenic exams) and then with PA.S.O.K’s (Desmes/General exams). Thus, what needs to be shown empirically is the transformation process which took place during that period, as far as teachers’ autonomy and the control of their labour process are concerned.

From the above a general remark can be made: the transformation process which has taken place concerns teachers’ work at Lyceum (3<sup>rd</sup> year). This transformation has to do with the aim of teaching. In the Desmes system teaching aims at the provision of knowledge which will be exchanged with a place at university. Thus, students are mainly interested in getting the knowledge required for the university entrance exams; otherwise, knowledge is of no immediate interest to them. In short, knowledge for them counts only insofar as it has an exchange value and not a use value.

As it was mentioned above - in the second chapter, in the section on teachers’ labour process - in order for the whole process of Greek teachers’ work to be theoretically grasped, grounded and conceptualised, this study will use the labour process theory. Having in mind the theoretical scheme developed in the previous chapter, teachers’ labour process is structured as following: Desmes (the curriculum) along with students (the “object”) constitute the means of teachers’ production. As for the curriculum aspects, namely, selection, organisation, pacing and timing, as it can be seen in the table which presents the curriculum, those are determined first by the state educational authorities (Ministry of Education) and then by the needs and requirements of the entrance exams. Such decisions concern what has to be taught and the period of time within which a specific part of the syllabus has to be taught.

Given the above restrictions, teachers are unable to control their labour process. In short, “what” has to be produced and “when” it might be produced are predetermined. Within this educational context and given, as discussed above, the primacy of Desmes-subjects and the fact that the syllabus of Desmes is examined in the entrance exams, students may only be interested in the specific syllabus and nothing more. It may be the case that anything that is not part of the university entrance exams is considered as useless, because it is knowledge which cannot be exchanged in the exam market. In this case the teachers' efforts to go beyond the exams requirements may be dependent on the students' dispositions to knowledge. In other words, the success of any effort to transcend the imposed determinations might be dependent on the students' “cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge. This is an issue which needs to be investigated and this is what this study will do.

Moreover, the success at the university entrance exams may be the students' sole criterion for assessing teachers' work. In this case, teachers are unable to control their means of production. Both the objects of their work -“students”- and the instrument -“curriculum”/Desmes - seem to be beyond their immediate control. Consequently, it seems difficult for teachers to “break” and ignore the limitations imposed on their labour process by the university entrance exams. Since the “message” sent by the structure of the Lyceum is that of priority given to Desmes-subjects, it seems difficult for students to ignore the exams requirements and be interested in knowledge which goes beyond that context. This is a topic which this study will empirically address.

The relations between teachers and their object of work, namely, students, which constitute, along with the relationships between teachers and the curriculum/Desmes, the relations in production, can be described as follows: the nature of these relationships is determined by “who” controls the frame of teaching: teachers, students or educational authorities. Framing, as defined above, refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be. In the case of Desmes, framing is controlled by the educational authorities (the Ministry) and its logic concerning the requirements of the General exams. This means that everything that is not part of and may not serve the requirements of the entrance exams cannot be easily transmitted. In this context, knowledge, both as

content and organisation of its transmission, should meet the requirements and conditions of the exams. Everything that is beyond this prescribed context may be considered by students, as was indicated above, useless and, consequently, unnecessary work for them, hindering in this way teachers' efforts to overcome the prescribed and predetermined context.

The above structure will affect teachers' perceptions of their work. For example, teaching Core subjects may be considered as a "torture" by teachers, because the above-described differentiation of subjects which favours Desmes-subjects may mean that they have to teach subjects which are not part of the General exams scheme, so students do not have any immediate interest in them and they will be noisy and indifferent to teachers' work. For the students, what mostly matters is the Desmes-subjects. Teaching and working with indifferent students means that teachers have to work hard, put more energy and spend more time in order to accomplish their job. Hence, another issue which will be part of this empirical work is to show whether Desmes are perceived by teachers and students as constituting the sole focus of their interest.

The above-discussed structure of the Lyceum seems to favour its preparatory function. This means that the Lyceum must prepare students for their General exams through Desmes-subjects; it must "produce" well-prepared students. In addition, by stressing the primacy of Desmes-subjects, this structure signals to students that they have to pay more attention to Desmes-subjects than to Core ones. Consequently, it might be the case that students are mostly interested in getting only the kind and the amount of knowledge which will be useful and helpful for their exams.

Thus, knowledge, from the viewpoint of the students, might be seen as a "commodity" which has "use-value" only to the extent that it is a bearer of "exchange-value", namely, only insofar as the knowledge they get from teachers can be "exchanged" in the university entrance exams with a good mark. In other words, students will develop an instrumental approach to school (Desmes) knowledge instead of an intrinsic one.



Therefore, teachers' autonomy may be restricted to the degree that they have to focus on the needs and requirements of university entrance exams and prepare students, that is, to give them only the knowledge which is useful and helpful for the exams. They always have to bear in mind the entrance exams as their first priority and work according to their students' educational needs. To give an example, let's suppose that most students in a classroom cannot assimilate a unit within the prespecified period of time. This means that their teacher has to spend more time on it until students are in a position to follow him/her. This can hardly be achieved, as the teacher has to teach and complete his/her work within a prespecified period of time. All this means that teachers have to design and plan their work in such a way that the university entrance exams requirements can be fulfilled, irrespective of students' capability to follow their teaching. They have to organise their work in such a way that they will be able to perform it within the limits of time defined by the authorities, because the educational authorities exert control, at regular intervals, by sending them a form and asking them to specify the number of pages already taught.(Appendix V).This results in a process of *intensification* and feelings of stress, as teachers must always have in mind the concrete deadlines set by authorities, and teaching of the specific *quantity* of the syllabus must be finished within a strictly predetermined period of time. Thus, in the process, as Apple argues, "quality is sacrificed for quantity. Getting done is substituted for work well done" (Apple, 1992, p.25).

Hence, the teachers' labour process, in Braverman's terms, can be described as follows: the fact that teachers, according to the above discussion, have to put all their energies into preparing students for the university entrance exams means that they cannot plan and organise their teaching time as they would like to in order to meet their students' educational needs. Preparing for exams demands that a more technical style of teaching should be developed, in that it is the "technicalities" of the exams, such as questions which may be considered as very probable to be asked ("S.O.S" questions), the spirit of the exams, the way the questions are posed etc, that have to be taught. This focus undermines a more reflective style of teaching and work in general and shapes an alienating form of teaching/learning.

Thus, it might be inferred that the process of conception is separated from that of execution in a very clear way. The educational authorities (Ministry/Directorate) define the “conception” process; teachers carry out the “execution” process.<sup>53</sup>

However, in the above processes, the factor “students” has to be taken into consideration. Students do not form a homogeneous group of people, but come from families belonging to different socio-economic strata and, as discussed before (ch.2), they carry, according to Bourdieu’s term, a variety of forms of “cultural capital”. This might result in differentiated working understandings of teachers. It might mean that teachers working with students from privileged socio-cultural strata may not perceive the restrictions on autonomy imposed by the system of Desmes in the same way as teachers working with students from working class strata. This is because, as we discussed in the previous chapter, middle class students are geared to learn almost anything<sup>54</sup>. Thus, teachers may easily overcome the restrictions and go beyond the requirements of Desmes, because they have an attentive and willing audience. In the opposite case, however, the audience is not “ready” to listen to and learn things beyond the concrete requirements of Desmes which may be supposed to be useless. In our case, this might mean that pupils, for example, with positive dispositions to knowledge may enable teachers to go beyond the Desmes’ narrow and prescribed context and, to a certain extent, rid teachers of Desmes restrictions and alienation.

As mentioned above, in the Prefatory Memorandum of the 1351/83 Act, the Government introduced the system of Desmes, among other reasons, in order to contest para-education or the so called “frontesteria”. Here it has to be stressed that the presence of frontesteria constitutes an indisputably widespread phenomenon in the Greek educational reality. In Greek society, frontesteria are considered by students as necessary in order to be prepared for the university entrance exams, because they specialise precisely in this area.

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<sup>53</sup> In the execution of their work teachers have guidance and support by School Advisors whose role is to provide: scientific-pedagogic guidance, contribution to teachers’ in-service training and in general they have to help them to face school problems. They visit the schools of their educational area and get information from head teachers and teachers about the school’s educational work (Tsountas, K & Xronopoulou, 1995, pp. 40-43).

<sup>54</sup> Students from the middle-class are habituated (habitus) to work within the habitus of the school.

However, with the introduction of the system of Desmes this preparatory role is now attributed by the state to schools, Lycea. It is now clear that both sectors - state/schools and private/frontesteria - do share a common aim, namely, that of preparing students for the General exams. The above thoughts lead us to argue that we are dealing here with the phenomenon of the *quasi market*. This means that students "buy" preparation for the General exams from two sectors: the state school (public) and the frontistirio (private). Yet at this point we have to say that frontesteria's *raison d'être* has always been the same, namely, they specialise in preparing students for exams. This might mean that in the students' minds frontesteria are the best places for preparation in that they are the "specialists" and "experts" in this area. Consequently, students may pay more attention to frontesteria than to teachers' work at schools. They may also compare the work done by teachers at state schools to that done at frontesteria and this may influence teachers' work.

From the above argument it can be assumed that teachers experience pressures and supervision stemming both from the state and also from their students as a result of comparisons made with frontesteria. These feelings, we think, are becoming pronounced in the case of Desmes, because what is demanded by teachers is exactly what is needed by the exams, nothing more, nothing less. This correspondence between the work done in Desmes and the exams requirements may create stress for teachers who have to perform their work within a prescribed oppressive framework.

Thus, all this, we argue, signifies a kind of *de-skilling* of teachers work in schools. De-skilling here means that since teachers' work at schools is controlled by the two mentioned agents (state educational authorities and students via their comparisons made to frontesteria), then it may be almost impossible for teachers to have any form of control over their work process. Teachers at schools may be seen as deskilled in that frontesteria and their teachers are taken - by students - to be more skilled as far as the exam domain is concerned. With the emphasis put on Desmes and the exams requirements, the role of frontesteria has been upgraded and their teachers are considered by students as more skilled compared with those at state schools.

In sum, the description of the processes taking place at Lycea may lead us to argue, following Braverman, that a process of *proletarianisation* has been under way, in

that there are two forms of control upon teachers' work, namely: an explicit form by the state and an implicit one by frontesteria, both of which are undermining, reducing and hindering teachers' control over their labour process.

This may mean that, under these circumstances, there is both a process of disempowerment of the state schools and of empowerment of frontesteria, as far as the preparation of students for university entrance exams is concerned, but this can also be seen as a disempowerment of the state school in general as a provider of knowledge and access to credentials. In particular, this appears to be taking place through the undertaking by the Lyceum of the preparatory function for the entrance exams. The focus of the Lyceum is now identified with that of frontesteria. But this, in essence, results in favouring and empowering frontesteria – the private sector – since the work done in state schools, the preparation for the General exams, constitutes *by definition* the domain of frontesteria. In short, it can be said, that a process of “frontistirisation” of state schools is taking place.

The above account of the disempowerment of schools versus the empowerment of frontesteria will be approached empirically to examine the strength of the argument by collecting information from different groups of people who participate directly or indirectly in the educational process. Two of these groups are (1) teachers, who follow the defined guidelines, and (2) students, who attend schools and frontesteria.

To recapitulate, this study will investigate teachers' labour process and whether a process of proletarianisation has been under way. The empirical issues following from this are to identify the modalities of proletarianisation which, as we argued in the second chapter, might vary according to the teachers' “object” of work, namely the students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, the teachers' gender, specialisation and seniority.

In other words, we need to think about the teachers' labour process as a process whose “object” on which work is performed, contrary to other labour processes such as for example those of workers in material commodity production, is human beings, namely, students, who come from different social backgrounds. To ignore this means to ignore a vital feature of the Marxist social theory, which is the class character of

societies, that is to say that societies are characterised by social inequalities and also composed of human beings, namely, active agents, not simply material objects.

The transformation of the above-discussed issues into research questions and the methodological approach of the above perspective, which constitutes the focus of this empirical research, will be the topic of the next chapters (Ch.4, 5), in which the research questions, the research strategy and the research methods used in the investigation will be presented.

## Chapter 4: Research Questions and Hypotheses

In the previous chapters we developed the broader theoretical perspective and the conceptual context within which this study is inscribed. In this chapter we will outline the corpus of hypotheses which form the axes upon which the empirical aspects of this study will be structured and developed.

Research questions are not shaped in a vacuum; they arise from existing theoretical approaches and analyses of the research subject. In this case, the stimulus which offered the basic theoretical and conceptual approach for the development of the hypotheses concerning teachers' labour process was the proletarianisation thesis.

The proletarianisation thesis, developed within the framework of the labour process theory, brought to the surface and formulated the issue of teachers' proletarianisation which results in a process of rationalisation of teachers' work in capitalist societies in eras of financial regression and decline of the accumulation rate (Apple, 1986, p.31). In short, it argued that the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula at schools signals a reduction of teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process, leading to a process of proletarianisation.

A question was raised concerning the Greek education case, in particular, the introduction of the system of Desmes by PA.SO.K, a system which corresponds to the structure described above, as it is highly prescribed and standardised. The argument has been advanced that a process of proletarianisation, specified as increasing restrictions of autonomy and control over the labour process, is taking place in developed capitalist societies and is identified in the Greek case, arising here not as an economic "necessity" but as a political one. To put it in another way, a proletarianisation process is under way as the outcome of certain state educational policies. These are not always necessarily *directly* dictated by the economic needs of the capital, though this does not, in any case, mean that ultimately they are of no benefit to the capital. What is important in this case and needs to be taken into consideration is whether the particular educational policies, in the end, help and

contribute to the reproduction of the existing educational inequalities. This leads us to formulate the main and basic hypothesis of this study, which is:

1. In Greece a teachers' proletarianisation process has been taking place; this process involves teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process becoming more restricted. More specifically, this process did not appear suddenly but it is seen as part of the history of teachers' labour process and not as an autonomous case within it. The point of departure of this process can be traced back to New Democracy's educational policy which P.A.S.O.K continued and intensified. This took the form of the introduction of the standardised curricula called Desmes. Hence, the basic hypothesis of proletarianisation leads us to the following sub-hypotheses:

As we have already seen, the literature concerning the teachers' proletarianisation process takes into consideration only the factor "gender" in teaching, as the majority of teachers in elementary as well as secondary schools are women. We do agree with the consideration of "gender" in approaching teaching, but we want to argue that there might also be other parameters which characterise teaching and are consequently vital to be specified, understood and accounted for within the proletarianisation process.

In other words, an issue which has not been discussed by the writers on teachers' proletarianisation is whether restrictions of their autonomy and controls imposed on their labour process are perceived and understood in the same way by all teachers or whether there are variations and different modalities. This means that, as well as considering "gender", we have to see teachers not as a homogeneous social group, but as carrying variations which have to do with: their specialisation, their seniority and their students (the "object" of their work) who embody different "cultural capital".

In this study, the last factor (students' cultural capital) is considered as a factor of major importance in that, as was discussed in the theoretical section, it constitutes the "object" of teachers' labour process. The teachers' relationship to their students lies at the centre of this viewpoint. Students is not a homogeneous social category; they have differences as far as "cultural capital" is concerned.

It is argued here that “*students’ cultural capital*” and *habitus* towards knowledge are the factors which need to be thoroughly examined and this study will attempt to do so, since these factors make the difference, as far as issues of autonomy and control of the labour process are concerned, and, consequently, in the process of proletarianisation of teachers. In this study, students and their cultural capital are considered to be a crucial part of teachers’ labour process, as they play a decisive role in shaping and structuring teachers’ work experiences towards proletarianisation. Thus, apart from the nature of the curriculum, – whether it is becoming more prescribed and standardised or not - which also affects and shapes the teachers’ work process, the *students’ cultural capital* must be taken into consideration as well.

This study, unlike what most labour process theories in education argue, has as its central point of reference the significance of the factor of the “students’ cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge in shaping teachers’ understanding and perceptions of their labour process. Teachers’ labour process, in this piece of research, is conceived of and studied as a process mediated in part by the students’ socio-cultural background. Students are not seen as unrelated to the teachers’ labour process; they have to be included and inscribed within the teachers’ work process as a vital feature of it.

Thus, teachers’ work has not only to do with the curriculum and interventions by educational authorities, as argued by the labour process theory. It simultaneously has to do with students’ culture and their social characteristics which constitute the “object” of the teachers’ labour process. Without consideration and study of this parameter in teachers’ labour process, the understanding of teachers’ work will not only be partial and incomplete, but it will also lead to a misinterpretation of the teachers’ labour process.

2. Thus, the second hypothesis can be formulated as following:

The process of teachers’ proletarianisation is not a homogeneous one, but has a variety of manifestations. There are parameters which shape the variations in modalities of proletarianisation.

The above leads us to the following sub-hypotheses:



2.1 Teachers working with students with a “rich”<sup>55</sup> cultural capital do not experience restrictions of their autonomy and control over their labour process in the same way as those working with students with a “poor” cultural capital. Hence, in the Greek case, this sub-hypothesis can be translated into the expectation that the restrictions imposed by the system of Desmes on teachers’ autonomy and the controls over their labour process are not experienced by all teachers in the same way.

2.2 In addition, because of the extensive presence of women in education referred to above (2.9.2) and their multiple roles in society, in general, a question arises. Given the differentiated roles of both sexes in society, a research question which can be developed is: are there any differences between the sexes as far as issues of perceiving and understanding restrictions of their autonomy and control over their labour process are concerned? Or to put it in a different way: is *gender* a factor which shapes teachers’ proletarianisation process? This means that there might be differences in proletarianisation attributable to the gender of the teacher. In particular, as far as the Greek case is concerned, this can be translated into the hypothesis that men and women do not experience the restrictions imposed by Desmes and the control by the authorities in the same way.

2.3 Another research question which needs to be posed is whether teachers’ proletarianisation process is affected by teachers’ *specialisation*. In particular, a way of addressing this empirically is to take teachers of different specialisation, such as, in our case, Mathematicians and Historians, to see if the two groups share the same work experiences. The nature of teachers’ subjects varies, ranging from the most technical and positivist to the most theoretical and abstract. Thus, an empirical study of teachers’ labour process might show that there are significant differences between the two categories of subjects mentioned above, in what concerns the proletarianisation of the teachers’ labour process, as measured by their reported changes in their experiences of autonomy and control. What has to be taught is not independent from how this has to be taught. Consequently, this might mean that “prescription” and “standardisation” of the curriculum are perceived in a different

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<sup>55</sup> Rich cultural capital: we mean that students have a positive, a good relationship with knowledge and they have access to educational facilities such as: books, private lessons, equipments etc. In the opposite case students cultural capital can be characterised “poor”.

way by teachers of different specialisations. This differentiation might mean that proletarianisation is not a homogeneous process.

2.4 In addition, *seniority* is one of the teachers' professional traits. Another research question which has to be addressed is what role seniority plays in how teachers experience restrictions of their autonomy and control over their labour process. This study argues that it makes sense, as discussed in Chapter two, to investigate the role of expertise, as measured by the length of service (seniority), in issues of autonomy and control of teachers' labour process. To be more specific, the hypothesis is that "expertise" makes a difference in how teachers perceive and experience the "prescription" and "standardisation" of Desmes.

In short, the research question is: are the restrictions imposed by the prescribed and standardised curriculum on the teachers' autonomy and control of their labour process perceived by both categories, experienced and less experienced teachers, in the same way? If not, what are the patterns of differences? The factor of seniority, as well as that of specialisation of teachers, tends to be ignored by the labour process theory, which takes into consideration only gender, as we discussed in Chapter two, referring to the theoretical and conceptual framework. More specifically, a piece of research focused on teachers' labour process should also examine those dimensions since they are part of teachers' labour power, which, in turn, constitutes a vital element in the "operation" of teachers' labour process, namely, the transformation process.

When we study teachers' labour process we have to take into account that it is supervised and controlled by the state, the local authorities or the owners of private schools. But this control may not be understood and experienced in the same way by all teachers. Their perception of it may vary according to the above referred parameters which have to do either with the "object" of their labour process, the "students' cultural capital", or the parameters of gender, specialisation and seniority. To neglect this would mean that we fail to see teaching as a labour process with a specific shape and structure.

3. Focusing this study on the Greek case of teachers' labour process, we discussed in Chapter three (the "Greek case") that *frontesteria*, along with schools, play a preparatory role for the General exams students sit. Within this context the hypothesis which can be formulated is that *frontesteria* play a role in structuring the teachers' labour process in state schools. This is because the preparation for the entrance exams done in *frontesteria* has implications on teachers' work in state schools, in that in both cases the "focus" of their work - "preparation" for the General exams- is the same, and this leads to the idea-hypothesis that teachers' labour process in state schools may be affected and shaped by the existence of the private sector which functions *in parallel* with that of the state sector.

From the above, two possibilities can be identified: either *frontesteria* are helpful to teachers in schools or they are disruptive to teachers' work at schools. This is because students either have already learnt the syllabus at *frontesteria* and this is helpful for teachers, or they may pay more attention to *frontesteria* and be indifferent and negative to teachers' work in schools, so in this case *frontesteria* render state school teachers' work dysfunctional. In the latter case, teachers' work at schools may be devalued, disempowered and proletarianised, compared to previous conditions.

The above possibilities stem from our view that, in essence, we are dealing with a *quasi market* phenomenon. This means that students "buy" preparation from two sectors, the public and the private one. We say *quasi market* because the public preparation, the state school, is compulsory, it cannot be avoided. This situation shapes, we argue, a context within which teachers' labour process is constituted and developed *in relation to* *frontesteria*, the private sector, and not in an autonomous way. This cannot be ignored when studying teachers' labour process.

In other words, this may be the case because, to the extent that the state school is transformed into a "public frontistirio", as developed in the previous chapter, both the public sector (state schools) and the private sector (*frontesteria*) operate in the same domain following the same rationale. This means that both sectors "sell" the same "product", that is, preparation for the General exams which can be exchanged in the exams market.

To recapitulate, this is a piece of empirical work concerning teachers' labour process, and, in particular, the proletarianisation thesis. It is specified and contextualised in the case of Greece during the '80s and up to the mid '90s and focuses on the introduction of the system of Desmes in the Greek Lyceum. More specifically, this empirical work is about issues of autonomy of teachers and the control of their labour process, as far as the organisation, the pacing and the timing of their teaching work are concerned.

The research strategy which will be used is a small-scale survey, designed in such a way that it can follow and be applied to the theoretical framework which we have developed, that is, the Marxist one. This means that the empirical work is organised into two sections: the one concerning teachers working with students who come from middle/upper class families and the other focusing on teachers working with students who come from working class families. The specific two groups of students were chosen because they have a class origin which differentiates them as far as "cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge are concerned.

Before we proceed to the above-designed presentation of findings, in the following chapter we will present the research design and methods used in this study.

## Part II: Working on the problem

### Chapter 5: Methodology and Research Questions

#### 5.1 General Research Design

Turning research questions into empirical projects is not a simple task. It depends on the theoretical approach a study has adopted. It is the theoretical approach that indicates the *research paradigm*<sup>56</sup> within which a research study is located and the research questions that guide researchers in choosing specific research methods. Usually there is a tendency, as Scott & Usher observe, to assume that doing research is mainly an issue of following the right procedures and research methods. More specifically, they argue:

This assumption [the above] needs to be questioned because it misleadingly portrays research as mechanistic and algorithmic...research is not a technology but a practice, it is not individualistic but social and there are no universal methods to be applied invariantly. (1999, p. 10)

In the spirit of the above quotation we argue that research methodology in social sciences cannot be the same as that used in natural sciences. This is due to the fact that the research object of social sciences is different from that of natural ones. The object of social sciences is social *relationships* between people and people have views and opinions about the relationships in which they are embedded, which would be inconceivable in the case of natural sciences. Thus, this dictates a different methodology: the object of research cannot be explained if, first of all, the sense ascribed to a relationship by the participants is not understood.

In the present study, the review of the literature on teachers' work has led to the formulation of a way of thinking, of a theoretical framework within which teachers' work will be studied. The theoretical approach adopted here is the Marxist which is a "critical" one. The term "critical" approach here denotes our agreement with Brian

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<sup>56</sup>Following the philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn, an overall theoretical perspective is called a *research paradigm*. There are multiple research paradigms, each with their own knowledge about the world, about how knowledge is obtained, about education (Ernest, 1994, p.19).

Fay's (1993, p.35) argument that critical science signifies a threefold process: enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation. By enlightenment we mean that this study will attempt to bring the real issues to the surface, to understand what lies beneath, which may be different from what is commonly perceived and 'evident'. Going beyond the surface, for example, in the case of teachers' work can lead to a deeper understanding of the processes taking place in their work and to an empowerment of teachers. This could, in turn, lead to a formation of consciousness of the real conditions of their labour process.

In our case, the above tripartite process means that this study will try to explore whether teachers in upper secondary education in Greece are being proletarianised, in short, to test the proletarianisation thesis. More specifically, we will demonstrate the main polarising tendencies, when comparing teachers' attitudes and practices between those working in contrasting educational contexts. The understanding of teachers' labour process is a necessary precondition for their empowerment, that is to say, so that teachers recognise the forces that shape their labour relations and, consequently, try to struggle and change conditions which restrict their autonomy and develop demands related to issues of control of their labour process.

Having the above tripartite scheme in mind, a number of specific research questions emerge. From a methodological point of view, the main objective of the empirical research is to discover whether the proletarianisation thesis can be applied, besides the case of advanced capitalist societies, to teachers in the Greek social context as well. More specifically, according to our theoretical framework and research questions, the objectives of this empirical investigation can be outlined as follows:

a) to describe changes taking place in teachers' work and obtain data concerning the role of prescribed curricula, Desmes, as far as the proletarianisation process is concerned. To this end, two samples of teachers were chosen. The reason, as this was discussed in the second chapter, is that teachers do not teach a homogeneous group of students. Students come from different socio-economic strata and possess diverse "cultural capital". In order to identify any differences between teachers working with students from the middle/upper class and those working with students from the working class, the first group of teachers consists of teachers who are working with

students from middle/upper class areas and the second one of teachers working with students from working class areas. In addition, data was collected from students themselves who have an everyday experience and contact with teachers teaching Desmes.

b) to understand and explain the implications of prescribed curricula, Desmes, on teachers' autonomy and control of their labour process.

In other words, this study will attempt to answer two types of questions: the first type is *what* changes are taking place in teachers' labour process and what teachers' working experiences are (descriptive dimension) and the second one is *why* teachers share specific working experiences (explanatory dimension). In short, the main hypothesis is that there are differentiated tendencies towards proletarianisation in the two groups of teachers. Here we have to say that, in accordance with our previous theoretical discussion, we expect to find that the two groups do not share the same kind of work experiences. As it was mentioned in the theoretical discussion, teachers working with students from working class families are expected to experience the restrictions of Desmes in a stronger way, compared to those working with students from middle/upper class families. What we think we are likely to find is that for teachers working with students from working class families the Desmes framework may be a source of restrictions of their autonomy which is perceived in a different way from that of teachers working with students from middle/upper class families.

The above research questions and objectives necessitated a methodological approach combining a quantitative and a qualitative nature and this led to the organisation of the research strategy in the form of a small-scale survey. Through the quantitative dimension of the methodological approach we intended to present an outline of the main tendencies towards proletarianisation for this sample and not to advance any kind of generalisability beyond this study. The qualitative aspect aims at exploring teachers' working experiences and perceptions concerning Desmes in depth. The further aim of this approach is to bring to the surface, examine, explain and illuminate issues concerning teachers' labour process as this is shaped by the parameters discussed in the second chapter, such as: students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, teachers' gender, specialisation and seniority and their

contribution and relationship to the proletarianisation process. The quantitative approach enables us, for example, to get information and learn “how many” teachers support the view that Desmes restrict their autonomy, but it can hardly explain “why” this happens. Therefore, a qualitative approach can help us gain a deeper insight into the processes operating within the two groups of teachers’ labour process.

In the literature on research methodology, the survey is considered an appropriate strategy in order to answer the “what” research questions (Robson, 1993, p.43). The survey is not the only research strategy which can answer the “what” exploratory questions; these can also be answered using case studies and experiment. However, we decided that the survey was the most appropriate research strategy in our case, because this was dictated by the nature of the research hypotheses and the purpose of this study. The main research hypothesis, as developed above, has to do with the identification of differentiated tendencies as far as the proletarianisation process is concerned. This means that, first of all, we wanted to map the views of both groups of teachers on their labour process, which, in turn, points to the need to collect data from a substantial number of teachers.

Another reason which dictated our use of a small-scale survey as a research strategy was the theoretical design of the study which involves two samples of teachers, those working with students from the middle/upper class and those with students from the working class. This, in itself, pointed to the necessity of a survey because it would enable us to have a very clear picture of what the differentiated tendencies between the two groups of teachers are, as far as the proletarianisation process is concerned. Ethnography or the case study, which also serve descriptive and explanatory purposes, were not possible or practicable for us because they demand participant observation, whereby the researcher is embedded in the day-to-day lives of teachers (Creswell, 1998, p.58, 61) and in our case it was impossible to get permission for doing this type of research.

It is believed that a survey can serve both descriptive and explanatory purposes. The level of information that can be obtained depends basically on the design of data collection instruments and the “quality” of analysis performed on collected data. In this study the research instruments used are: self-completed questionnaires and semi-



structured interviews (both provided in Appendices I - IV). Our prime concern with semi-structured interviews was to explore the way teachers perceive their labour process, more specifically, to understand the way they perceive the role of prescribed and standardised curricula on their autonomy and control of their labour process. This task cannot be effectively accomplished solely through questionnaires, because they have the disadvantage that you cannot have an in-depth conversation with the respondents. The effectiveness of the semi-structured interviews lies in the fact that since we have clearly-defined purposes and questions to ask about teachers' labour process, then the personal contact with the interviewees makes semi-structured interviews a useful tool in collecting information of a qualitative form.

A detailed description of the sampling and the research techniques that were used for the implementation of the research design now follows.

## **5.2 Sampling**

The population which, according to our theoretical discussion, can be addressed in this study consists of teachers whose specialisation is Maths or History (as part of Desmes) in the third year of upper secondary education (Lyceum). They come from two kinds of schools: schools located in middle/upper class areas and in working class areas.

In the selection of the sample the aims of the study were taken into consideration; these were to test the hypothesis that the proletarianisation thesis can be applied to teachers in Greece and to demonstrate the different modalities of the proletarianisation process. Because the intention of the study was not to make statistical generalisations about the thesis on teachers' proletarianisation, but to understand the social processes developed within the specific social context, it was not necessary to use a probability sample. For this reason, a non-probability sample was chosen, something commonly employed in small-scale surveys like this one.

Taking into account the objective of the study, it was decided that from the total number of 255 General Lycea in the broader area of Athens (84 in Athens, 57 in East Attica, 49 in West Attica and 65 in Piraeus) a percentage of about 25% of schools and a number of 50 teachers from the two groups (middle/upper class and working

class) were considered satisfactory sources of drawing data. Two areas are of interest and importance for this project: the northern and the western suburbs of Athens. The northern suburbs are inhabited by upper class social strata, whereas in the western part the population comes from working class strata. The number of schools which took part in the research was: eighteen (18) General Lycea from middle/upper class areas and fifteen (15) from working class areas. The schools in the working class areas are fewer because a greater number of teachers work there.

The social differentiation of the two groups is reflected in the data provided by the official statistics (1991 Census). Two criteria were used in order to select the sample: the first is the inhabitants' "occupation", which gives us information about a person's educational background, and the second one is "unemployment", an indicator which clearly has to do with social poverty and recession.

According to the official statistical data, the suburbs with a high percentage of the population coming from the two upper occupational strata (scientists and liberal professions/directors and top executives of firms) are: Psyhiko (50,6%), Philothei (48,4%), Papagou (48,2%), N.Psyhiko (38,2%), Kifisia (36,8%), Holargos (35,7%), Agia Paraskevi (33,8%), Halandri (31,8%), Marousi (31,7%) and Pefki (30,1%). As for unemployment in these areas, it is about 5 %, almost half the national average.

At the other social extreme can be located suburbs with a high percentage of working class strata (people working in primary production, workers, technicians) and a high rate of unemployment. These are: Agia Varvara (52,6%), Rentis (47,3%), Tavros (43,2%), Nea Liosia (42,7%), Drapetsona (42,6%), Keratsini (42,5), Aigaleo (42,3%), Peristeri (42,3%) and Nikaia (41,2%). The rate of unemployment here is about 10%. The number of schools selected from the above suburbs was 15 General Lycea and they all agreed to cooperate in the research project. The selection of the specific sample of schools was random (lottery method) from a list of Lycea.

The criterion used in order to select teachers was: teaching Desmes courses, more specifically, Mathematics and History. This was so because, as discussed in the theoretical approach of the study, in particular in the section on teachers' specialisation, these two subjects are considered typical examples of two categories

of subjects: the analytical (History) and the empirical-descriptive ones (Mathematics).

The reason why we chose these two subjects was, as discussed in the chapter devoted to the theoretical and conceptual framework (Ch.2), that we are interested in investigating possible differences between the two subjects which are of a different nature. History, as we argue, needs time in order to be properly taught; time for discussion, critical analysis, visits to museums and historical places. This means that History can be hardly prescribed and standardised without losing its essence. For this reason, an effort was made to construct as much as possible a balanced sample of teachers in terms of specialisation and gender. As for teachers' gender, we tried to have the most balanced possible sample of teachers, because we wanted to make comparisons between the two sexes as far as their perceptions and understanding of Desmes as standardised curricula are concerned.

In particular, an effort was made to select those teachers who had also taught at state schools before Desmes and would have an idea of the previous situation. To be more specific, from the twenty-four interviews conducted, twenty-three were with teachers working at schools before the system of Desmes, so that we could have a clear picture of whether the proletarianisation process was under way.

The profile of teachers selected in middle/upper class areas is the following: the majority of them are married and have children. There are twenty-five (25) women and twenty-five (25) men. Almost all have a permanent job; only one (1), in working class areas, works as a substitute teacher. As far as specialisation is concerned, there are twenty-eight (28) Mathematicians and twenty-two (22) teachers of Greek Literature ('Philologoi')<sup>57</sup>. As for seniority<sup>58</sup>, two (2) teachers have been working in state schools for 7-12 years and the rest forty-eight (48) for more than 12 years. As for teaching experience in Desmes, four (4) have 1-6 years, fifteen (15) have 7-12 years and thirty-one (31) have more than 13 years.

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<sup>57</sup> Those teachers who have specialised in Greek Literature can also teach History. So when we talk about Historians we mean those teachers teaching History whose broader specialisation is philological studies, hence the umbrella term "Philologoi".

<sup>58</sup> In terms of seniority, as far as the years of teaching at state schools and the years of teaching Desmes are concerned, three (3) groups of teachers were formed: 1) 1-6 years, 2) 7-12 years and 3) more than 13 years.

As regards the profile of teachers selected in working class areas, the picture is similar to that of teachers in middle/upper class areas. More specifically, most of them are also married and have children. There are twenty-four (24) men and twenty-six (26) women, twenty-four (24) Mathematicians and twenty-six (26) teachers of Greek literature. Most of them have taught Desmes for 5-10 years. As for their experience in state schools, one (1) has 1-6 years, twenty-five (25) have 7-12 years and twenty-four (24) have more than 12 years. In what concerns teaching experience in Desmes, eleven (11) have 1-6 years, twenty-seven (27) have 7-12 years and twelve (12) have more than 13 years.

Along with the information collected from teachers, in order to have a fuller understanding of teachers' work in relation to Desmes as prescribed curricula, data concerning perceptions of teachers' work were also collected from forty-eight (48) students, twenty-four (24) from middle/upper class and twenty-four (24) from working class areas. The reason for this was to explore in depth and cross-check teachers' perceptions on Desmes. To this end, six (6) students from four (4) Lycea from both categories of social areas (48 students altogether) were interviewed. Each group of students consisted of an equal number of boys and girls and there were 2 students from each of the four Desmes (one boy and one girl). An effort was made to select students who did indeed come from upper class families and working class/unemployed families in the two areas respectively. The selection of schools was done in a random way and in the selection of students we took into account their socio-economic background. In cooperation with the head teachers we selected those students in upper/middle class areas whose parents have Higher education and in working class areas we selected students whose parents are workers or unemployed and their educational status is very low (primary education).

The techniques used in this survey for collecting data are questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was used with teachers and the semi-structured interviews with both teachers and students.

### 5.3 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix I) was chosen as a research method in order to get concrete information about our research hypotheses (Ch.4), which have to do with the identification of different modalities of the proletarianisation process. In a sense, it was used as the primary source of identifying teachers' views on the research questions we have developed, so that we could then proceed to a more detailed and in-depth analysis through the semi-structured interviews. The role of the questionnaire was a descriptive one, namely, to give us a very clear idea of what is going on with Desmes and teachers' work. Before the questionnaire was distributed to all groups of teachers, it was first tested with five (5) teachers<sup>59</sup>, and in this pilot stage no problems with it were identified.

The next stage was conducting semi-structured interviews, whose aim was to go deeper and explore in detail what teachers' working reality was about and, in this way, to understand the whole process of teachers' work. Moreover, in order to identify and "measure" the credibility of the issues we study, we had a semi-structured interview with School Advisors and Teacher unionists. More specifically, the reason for getting information from School Advisors was to find out what their expectations and views were as far as teachers' work within prescribed curricula is concerned. In this light, the question whether they share, for example, teachers' perceptions and interpretations of Desmes would be interesting, as they play an advisory role to teachers' work.

Thus, four (4) School Advisors were interviewed, two (2) Mathematicians and two (2) Historians (Philologoi). The selection of the sample of School Advisors and Teacher unionists was random. School Advisors were chosen from the two social areas, one of each specialisation from a middle/upper class area and the other from a working class area., and from both specialisations, Mathematicians and Historians. From a total of eleven (11) School Advisors (9 of Greek literature/ Historians, 2 Mathematicians) in middle/upper and working class areas, we chose two (2) Historians and two (2) Mathematicians. This selection was done in a random way (lottery system).

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<sup>59</sup> Here we have to notice that the pilot of the questionnaire should not be confused with the exploring role of the semi-structured interviews which were conducted in the beginning of the research (ch. 1) in order for the area of the study to be better approached.

The reason for collecting data from Teacher unionists was to explore the way they perceive and understand Desmes as part of the teachers' labour process. In short, we wanted to know what kind of "messages" about Desmes these Teacher unionists received and projected. This is because, we think, their perceptions and understanding of the system of Desmes contribute to the formulation of the educational demands they develop. Three (3) Teacher unionists were chosen, one from each of the three different political wings: the Conservative party (New Democracy), the Socialist party (PA.SO.K) and the coalition of the Left (Synaspismos).

The semi-structured interview (Appendix IV) with the teachers and the questionnaire (Appendix II) for School Advisors and Teacher unionists included questions on topics related to the issues of the nature of Desmes as prescribed curricula and their relationship to teachers' autonomy, control of their labour process, (Questions 13,14,26 and 1-8) the role of frontesteria (Questions 22 and 9-10, 13), Lyceum (Questions 11, 12 of the questionnaire for School Advisors and teacher unionists) and, finally, the evaluation of teaching (Question 30 of the semi-structured interview with teachers).

The questionnaire for teachers consisted of forty (40) closed and open-ended questions and was structured around the following issues which were developed within the conceptual framework we discussed in the second chapter. A group of closed questions (10-16) is related to issues of prescribed curricula in general and Desmes in particular. This is related to our argument that Desmes can be conceptualised as prescribed curricula which restrict teachers' autonomy. Then the next group of questions (17-23) has to do with the theme of "frontesteria". The aim of this group of questions is inscribed in our conceptual discussion that frontesteria are the "vehicle" for disempowering teachers at schools. The following ten questions (24-33) refer to teachers' problems in their daily school life, their job satisfaction, and generally have to do with the possible positive and negative aspects of Desmes, their perceptions about the nature of their work and of the working conditions. The underlying logic of this set of questions is related to our conceptual scheme that Desmes, as standardised and prescribed curricula, may shape a working environment

which restricts teachers' autonomy and control in issues such as the organisation, pacing and timing of their daily work. The last set of questions is composed of closed and open-ended questions, related to the general issue of the crisis facing the Lyceum, its causes and the ways teachers face it.

As far as the type of questions is concerned, those are closed and open-ended. Most of them are closed questions and the rationale for this is that closed questions can provide specific answers to specific questions. This was very important in our case, in that, as we discussed above, the questionnaire forms a primary tool for describing what is going on in teachers' daily working life. Open-ended questions were chosen in cases where we wanted to get the respondents' views on general educational and social topics and cross-check the answers to the closed questions. For the "measurement" of attitudes we constructed the closed questions using the Likert scaling (Gilbert, 1993), a five- point scale. The five points in this scale are: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree.

As far as the issue of the reliability<sup>60</sup> of answers is concerned, this was faced by asking for the same information more than once using a similar question (Babbie, 1979, p.131), a double - checking technique. The issue of the validity<sup>61</sup> of measurements was confronted by paying attention to the conceptualising process. Hence, in this study, the essence and the core of changes in the proletarianisation process is located around the key concepts which constitute features of teachers' labour process – "autonomy", "control", "disempowerment" of teachers' work. In order to measure these concepts, we put our emphasis and attention to constructing, as much as possible, a set of questions which would yield conceptually valid information.

Thus, the measurement of teachers' "autonomy" and "control" of their labour process was approached through questions 10-14 of the questionnaire distributed to teachers, questions 13,14, 25, 26 of the semi-structured interview and question 8,9 of the semi-structured interviews with students (see the questionnaire distributed to

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<sup>60</sup> Reliability: the extent to which a *measuring instrument* would give the same value if used over and over again, providing the *attribute* measured did not change (Katzner, 1998, glossary).

<sup>61</sup> Validity: how well a measuring instrument measures the phenomenon under investigation (ibid).

teachers and the form of the semi-structured interview with students in the Appendices). The changes in the “empowerment” of teachers' at frontesteria and the consequent “disempowerment” of teachers at state schools were addressed through the group of questions concerning frontesteria: question 17 of the questionnaire, question 22 of the semi -structured interview and questions 2, 3, 4, 5 of the semi-structured interviews with students. Finally, feelings of stress and dissatisfaction of teachers, as a consequence of the changes in autonomy and control of their labour process, were identified through question 24 of the questionnaire for teachers and questions 15, 27 of the semi-structured interview.

We distributed one hundred and twenty-five questionnaires in order to get one hundred. The return rate was 80%. Here it has to be noted that there were not any serious problems in our contact with teachers. The head teachers of schools were very helpful and cooperative. The questionnaires were mainly delivered at face to face meetings and in cases where this was not possible, they were delivered through the head teacher or the school secretary in a closed envelope accompanied by a cover letter. In most cases, a period of two weeks was required for their completion. It was the researcher's responsibility to contact schools by phone and collect the questionnaires when they had been completed.

Finally, this empirical research was conducted during the academic year 1996-97.



## 5.4 The Semi-structured Interview

The collection of the questionnaires was followed by a series of semi-structured interviews with teachers in order to gain a deeper understanding of the information obtained through the questionnaires. A series of twenty-four (24) semi-structured interviews were conducted. Twelve (12) semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers working in affluent areas and twelve (12) with those working in working-class areas. The subject matter for the interviews consisted of a list of topics related to that of the self-completed questionnaires. The way teachers were selected for semi-structured interviews was mainly determined by their answers to the questions about the nature of Desmes as prescribed curricula and their effect on their daily working experiences. More specifically, as we said above, our main objective was to identify, in both groups of teachers, the main tendencies as far as teachers' working experiences are concerned. Hence in working class areas we selected the interviewees among those who agreed with the view that Desmes can be considered standardised curricula and restrict teachers' autonomy, because that was the main tendency (Qs 11, 14 of the questionnaire for teachers). In middle/upper class areas, because the main tendency was exactly the opposite, we selected the interviewees among those who did not agree that Desmes can be considered standardised curricula and restrict teachers' autonomy. The rationale for this type of selection has to do with the specific type of question which this study is addressing. To be more concrete, this approach will enable us to explore the polarizing effects *between* each of our two groups and do so at the level of the lived experiences of teachers where they report on their working lives. Thus we are taking teachers differentiated by the social class location of their work to identify the main aspects pulling them apart. While this cannot fully address the structural complexities of the question *why* there are differences between both groups, as far as their working experiences are concerned, it should allow us to identify and examine the sharply differentiating features pulling them in different direction and so create the possibility of making the case for a reconsideration of the teacher proletarianisation thesis. Also we have tried to have a balanced sample, within this, as far as "gender", "specialisation" and "seniority" are concerned in order to allow an examination of their relative influences. The above semi-structured interviews were conducted in the interviewees' offices (except in the case of a teacher who asked to be interviewed at her home). The duration of the

interview was an hour on average. We had no negative reactions to our request for an interview with them.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with groups of students coming from affluent and working-class areas. The choice of the semi-structured type of interview was dictated by the need to get concrete information on specific issues, a need which can be better fulfilled with semi-structured than with unstructured interviews. These interviews were conducted in schools in groups of six students each. The selection of students was made with the cooperation of head teachers and the students' socio-cultural background (parents' education and professional status) was taken into consideration.

We conducted group interviews because our aim was to explore and describe students' shared experiences in the classroom. Group interviews were also used here for triangulation purposes in conjunction with the questionnaires distributed to teachers (Denzin, 2000, p.651). In other words, the semi-structured interviews with students were conducted in order to cross-check the teachers' views. Here our concern was to acquire an understanding of how the interviewees make sense of their daily experiences in the classroom, as far as Desmes are concerned, and how they see their teachers in their daily work.

In what concerns the analysis of open-ended questions, we used the method of content analysis. This is a method which leads to the systematic codification of the written and oral responses obtained (Kyriazi, 1999, p.285). To be more specific, we systematically codified the content of the questions. Namely, the procedure of our work was to define two broad themes in correspondence with our hypotheses: Desmes, autonomy and control of teachers' labour process on the one hand, and frontesteria and teachers' work on the other.

As for the semi-structured interviews, we used the same themes, categories and sub-categories of analysis as those used in open-ended questions and we present the answers by focusing on the views which are common to the majority of respondents. In this case we do not present the findings in the form of tables, because the number of interviewees is small, namely, twelve (12) interviewees in the teachers' case and twenty-four (24) in the students' case.

In what regards the procedure, we had very good co-operation with head teachers who followed our guidelines in choosing the sample of pupils (half of them boys and half girls). The interviews took place in an empty, quiet classroom suggested by the head teacher. On average the interview lasted sixty minutes.

An analysis of the findings collected from all the above sources will be presented in the following chapter.

## Chapter 6: Analysis-Presentation of findings

### Introduction

The aim of the second part of the study is threefold. First, in Chapter six we will present the main trends of the findings of the empirical work in relation to the hypotheses we posed in Chapter four. Our findings derive from: teachers, who answered the questionnaire and gave semi-structured interviews, students with whom we had semi-structured interviews, and School Advisors and Teacher unionists who answered the questionnaire. Then, in Chapter seven we will discuss the main tendencies of the findings in the light of our theoretical and conceptual framework. Finally, in Chapter eight we will present the conclusions drawn from the findings within the class reproduction context.

As we saw in Chapter four, our hypotheses are the following:

1. In Greece a teachers' proletarianisation process has been taking place which involves teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process becoming more restricted. This hypothesis is related to the next hypothesis which is that:
2. The process of proletarianisation is not a homogeneous one and but has a variety of manifestations and there are parameters which shape the variations in modalities of proletarianisation.
  - 2.1 Teachers working with students with a "rich" cultural capital do not experience restrictions of their autonomy and control over their labour process in the same way as those working with students with a "poor" cultural capital. In short, we argue, that the "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge factors, in short, the socio-economic background of students' families, do make a difference to teachers' proletarianisation, because the two groups of teachers do not share the same "object". Hence, in the Greek case, this sub-hypothesis can be translated into the assumption that the restrictions imposed by the Desmes system on teachers' autonomy and the control over their labour process are not experienced by both groups of teachers in the same way.
  - 2.2 In addition, another issue arises in relation to the parameter of teachers' gender, as this was discussed above (Ch.2.9.2). Given the differentiated roles of both sexes in society, a research question which can be developed is: are there any differences between the sexes, as far as issues of perceiving and

understanding restrictions on their autonomy and control of labour process are concerned? Or, to put it differently: is *gender* a factor which shapes teachers' proletarianisation process? This means that there might be differences in proletarianisation attributable to the gender of the teacher. In particular, as far as the Greek context is concerned, this can be translated into the hypothesis that each of the sexes does not experience the restrictions imposed by Desmes and the control by the authorities in the same way.

- 2.3 Another research question which needs to be posed is whether teachers' proletarianisation process is affected by teachers' *specialisation* (Ch.2.9.3). In particular, a way of addressing this empirically is to take teachers of different specialisation, such as Mathematicians and Historians, and see if these do share the same work experiences. In the Greek context this means that Mathematicians and Historians may not experience the restrictions of Desmes in the same way.
- 2.4 Moreover, another factor related to teachers' professional traits is *seniority* (Ch.2.9.4). An additional research question which has to be developed is the role of seniority in the way teachers experience restrictions on their autonomy and control over their labour process. To be more specific, the hypothesis is that "expertise" makes a difference in teachers' perceptions and experiences of the prescription and standardisation by Desmes.
3. Frontesteria play a role in structuring teachers' labour process at state school.

In keeping with our hypotheses and research design, the findings will be presented in two sections: in the first section (working class areas), we will present findings from teachers who work with students coming from working class families and in the second one (middle/ upper class areas), those from teachers whose students come from middle or upper class families.

## 6.1 Working class areas

The structure of this section will be as follows: first we will present the findings related to the first hypothesis and then those related to the third one, and then both will be tested against the second hypothesis.

In order to address the first hypothesis, we collected data from teachers (questionnaires and semi structured interviews) and students (semi structured interviews). Our findings are the following:

As far as the issues of autonomy and control related to predetermined and standardised curricula are concerned in general, the majority of teachers report that «generally speaking, a prescribed curriculum means that the teachers' autonomy and control are restricted». This is claimed by both sexes and specialisations and by all three groups of seniority. As can be seen below, in Table 1, the majority of men (15 in 24)<sup>61</sup> and the majority of women (24 in 26) replied that there are restrictions imposed by prescribed curricula. At this point it can be said that there is a significant number of men (9) who either are neutral (5) or disagree (4) that in general prescribed curricula restrict teachers' autonomy. This is the case for both specialisations and groups of seniority. More specifically: Mathematicians (15 in 24) and Historians (24 in 26) think that prescribed curricula restrict teachers' autonomy. As for the seniority groups, their views are: 20 in 25, 18 in 24, 8 in 11, 24 in 27 and 7 in 12 consider the prescribed curricula as restrictive curricula. From the above we can assume that there are no important differentiations between sexes, specialisations or groups of seniority.

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<sup>61</sup>Whenever we refer to the majority, we have added those who strongly agree to those who agree, and those who disagree to those who strongly disagree.

## Teachers' Views

### Issues of autonomy and control

**Table 1: Teachers' Autonomy and the Curriculum**

Q 10	Gender Men n= 24	Gender Women n=26	Spec/on Math/s n=24	Spec/on Hist/ns n=26	Sen/ty + schools 1st * n=1	Sen/ty + schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> ** n= 25	Sen/ty + schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> *** n=24	Sen/ty + Desmes 1st n=11	Sen/ty + Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	Sen/ty + Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
Generally speaking, a prescribed curriculum means that the teachers' autonomy and control are restricted.	1. 4 2. 11 3. 5 4. 4 5. 0	1. 7 2. 17 3. 2 4. 0 5. 0	1. 4 2. 11 3. 4 4. 5 5. 0	1. 7 2. 17 3. 2 4. 0 5. 0	1. 0 2. 1 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 5 2. 15 3. 5 4. 0 5. 0	1. 6 2. 12 3. 3 4. 3 5. 0	1. 2 2. 6 3. 2 4. 1 5. 0	1. 5 2. 19 3. 2 4. 1 5. 0	1. 4 2. 3 3. 3 4. 2 5. 0

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3 neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree

\* 1<sup>st</sup> group: teachers with 1-6 years at school,

\*\*2<sup>nd</sup> group: teachers with 7-12 years at school,

\*\*\*3<sup>rd</sup> group: teachers with more than 13 years at school. The same categorisation is used in the case of teaching Desmes.

### Desmes and autonomy

Teachers think that Desmes are «standardised courses which restrict their autonomy» (Q 14 of the questionnaire) and, in general, it is reported that “teaching Desmes can be said to restrict teachers' autonomy” (Q 11 of the questionnaire). More specifically, Table 2 below shows the following as far the parameters of gender, specialisation and seniority are concerned: 16 in 24 men and 16 in 26 women think that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy. This is the case for both specialisations and all groups of seniority. More specifically: 15 in 24

Mathematicians and 17 in 26 Historians support the idea about the restrictive character of Desmes. As for the seniority groups, their views are: 15 in 25, 16 in 24, 9 in 11, 17 in 27 and 6 in 12 consider Desmes to be restricting teachers' autonomy.

As for teachers' reports about the standardised and restrictive character of Desmes, the relative majority of teachers report that Desmes are standardised courses and restrict teachers' autonomy. In particular: 15 in 24 men and 14 in 26 women think that Desmes are standardised courses. 14 in 24 Mathematicians and 15 in 26 Historians consider Desmes as standardised curricula. As for the seniority groups, their views are: 13 in 25, 15 in 24, 8 in 11, 14 in 27 and 7 in 12 think that Desmes are standardised curricula. At this point it should be mentioned that there is a number of teachers (14) who think that Desmes are standardised courses but do not restrict teachers' autonomy.

**Table 2: Desmes and Autonomy**

Qs 11,14*	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty
	Men n= 24	Women n=26	Math/s N=24	Hist/ns n=26	+ schools 1 <sup>st</sup> n=1	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n= 25	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=24	+ Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=11	+ Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	+ Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
11. Teaching Desmes can be said to:										
1. restrict teachers' autonomy	1. 16 2. 6 3. 2	1. 16 2. 3 3. 7	1. 15 2. 6 3. 3	1. 17 2. 3 3. 6	1. 1 2. 0 3. 0	1. 15 2. 4 3. 6	1. 16 2. 5 3. 3	1. 9 2. 1 3. 1	1. 17 2. 3 3. 7	1. 6 2. 5 3. 1
2. stimulate intervention										
3. have no impact										
14. Desmes are:										
1. standardised courses which restrict autonomy	1. 15 2. 3 3. 6	1. 14 2. 4 3. 8	1. 14 2. 4 3. 6	1. 15 2. 3 3. 8	1. 1 2. 0 3. 0	4. 13 5. 4 6. 8	1. 15 2. 3 3. 6	1. 8 2. 1 3. 2	1. 14 2. 4 3. 9	1. 7 2. 2 3. 3
2. not standardised courses										
3. standardised but do not restrict autonomy										

\* the respondents only had one choice.



More specifically, their views, as these were expressed in the semi structured interviews, on Desmes and the issues of autonomy (Qs 13, 14, 25, 26 of the interview) are the following:

*...Desmes are standardised courses. I must complete the syllabus in a specific way, the fact that there is a concrete syllabus which has to be taught in a specific way for students to be prepared for the General exams within a specific period of time leaves no room to manoeuvre... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)*

*I feel restricted because I cannot broaden students' capabilities, because they will answer 'this is not included in the General exams so I do not want it'...You cannot spend more time on a unit you think is interesting...I do not use maps or slides because they are not necessary for the exams... (woman, historian, 13 years at school, 13 in Desmes)*

*...the time is the basic thing. To be more specific, in the case of other classes (except Desmes) you may not finish the syllabus and nobody's monitoring you. But in Desmes this cannot happen. You cannot manage the syllabus as you would want to... (man, mathematician, 15 years in schools, 9 years in Desmes)*

*Time is limited...There is a determined syllabus which has to be completed within a fixed period of time...students are not interested in knowledge other than that related to the exams. The system is such that it moulds us, imagine that in history, as we go along, we have to focus our attention on the possible questions posed in the General exams... (man, historian, 15 years at school, 10 in Desmes)*

*It is simple: the most important thing is that time is limited and pressing us... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 10 in Desmes)*

## Resistance and Desmes

It is reported by teachers (10 in 12) that it is not easy for a teacher to resist Desmes requirements and that before Desmes things were better (Qs 25, 26 of the interview):

*...I feel restricted because, for example, I cannot deal with a theorem which is not included in the exams requirements...students will tell me 'this is not included in the exams, I don't want it...before Desmes things were better, for me things were not pressing. Nothing restricted us... (man, mathematician, 23 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...the situation before Desmes - the two years before Desmes - was something similar to Desmes but before that, I think - because I have not experienced it -, things were better, students had more interests, their horizons were broader than those of the exams...(woman, historian, 20 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

*...the system of Desmes restricts me more than the previous one, because I must cover a concrete syllabus in a specific period of time... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...I follow the guidelines of the Ministry, the Pedagogical Institute and the Advisors, we report regularly on the progress of our work, time is too limited for anything more...(man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 12 in Desmes)*

*...You have to deal with the preparation, if you do not do this you will have problems...There is the syllabus book where we register what is taught every day... (man, historian, 15 years at school, 10 years in Desmes)*

*...the syllabus is too broad for the time we have available to finish it... (man, mathematician, 15, years at school, 6 years in Desmes)*

## **Students' educational background and demands**

**It is indicated by all teachers that the students' educational background is more important than the curriculum for their work (Q 28 of the questionnaire):**

*...the students' educational background is more important. The curriculum in itself is not sufficient for doing your work, I try to meet the demands of the curriculum but this depends on the students' competencies. It is necessary for students to be responsive in order to follow the curriculum... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)*

*... even though the curriculum restricts me, I can be more flexible when the students' educational background is good, then you can do a lot of things. You are 'free' to do what you like... the students' educational background helps you to do the best in your work... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

**As for students' demands, all the teachers interviewed (12) say that these are determined and coincide with the requirements of Desmes (Q 31 of the interview):**

*...students are only interested in the exams requirements, no more. Good students may have an interest in something more but they are a minority... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...The explanations they ask for are related to the exams...They want to understand the lesson in order to memorize it... (woman, historian, 13 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

*They do not want anything more, because they've got the impression that what they get from frontistiria is enough.... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)*

*They are not demanding at all, but I would like them to be...When I try to teach something more they resist, they saying that they have learnt it at the*

*frontesteria... (man, historian, 15 years at school, 10 years in Desmes)*

*...in general they are not demanding at all, probably because the area here is too problematic, it is a working class area... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 6 years in Desmes).*

### **Evaluation of work**

**As for teachers' work, it is reported (8 in 12) that it is mainly evaluated through Desmes (Q 30 of the interview):**

*...I believe that students recognize that part of their success in the exams is due to teachers and how much they have worked. I think that preparation for the exams affects the way a teacher is evaluated...students tend to recognize as good teachers those who have a positive contribution to success in the General exams... (woman, historian, 20 years at school, 13 years in Desmes).*

### **Methods, pace and sequence of teaching**

On their teaching methods, teachers report that they choose them according to the requirements of Desmes. More specifically, we can see from Table 3 below that in Q 12 the first choice, "Desmes requirements", is the most common choice compared to the other three. In particular, 10 in 24 men, 12 in 26 women, 10 in 24 Mathematicians and 12 in 26 Historians think that teaching methods are chosen according to the requirements of Desmes. The same can be seen in the groups concerning seniority: 11 in 25, 10 in 24, 6 in 11, 11 in 27 and 5 in 12 share the above view.

As for the pace of teaching, this depends on the requirements of Desmes and on other factors, such as a unit's difficulty or students' educational needs. More specifically, men's reports are divided into a unit's difficulty (7 in 24), students' educational needs (7 in 24) and Desmes requirements (8 in 24). In women's case, the pace depends on units' difficulty and Desmes requirements. Students' educational needs cannot be said to be taken into account. The same picture appears

in the Mathematicians' and Historians' case. The Mathematicians' pace of teaching depends on a unit's difficulty (8 in 24), students' educational needs (8 in 24), and Desmes requirements (7 in 24). The Historians' pace of teaching depends on Desmes requirements (10 in 26) and the units' difficulty (7 in 26). The fact that men take into account students' educational needs can be because the majority of them are Mathematicians and Mathematics, compared to History which is taught mainly by women, is a subject which cannot be effectively taught without taking into consideration the students' background.

For the groups of seniority, the general pattern of reports is similar. More specifically, teachers of the second group of seniority choose between the units' difficulty (8 in 25) and Desmes requirements (7 in 25). The third group of teachers in the same category report that their pace of teaching depends on the units' difficulty (8 in 24) and on Desmes requirements (8 in 24). The picture is similar for the other three categories of teachers grouped according to their experience in teaching Desmes. For the first group, it is the units' difficulty (5 in 11) and Desmes requirements (3 in 11) that affect the pace of their teaching. The same views are reflected in the second group: 12 in 27 say that the pace of their teaching depends on Desmes requirements and 7 in 27 on the units' difficulty. In the third group the reports are almost equally divided between all factors.

The sequence of teaching, is reported to be predetermined to a large extent. More specifically: 23 in 24 men strongly agree or agree. The same applies to women: 23 in 26 strongly agree or agree. 22 in 24 Mathematicians and 24 in 26 Historians think that the sequence is predetermined (either strongly agree or agree). The same view can be identified in the groups of seniority: 23 in 25, 22 in 24, 9 in 11, 27 in 27 and 10 in 12 strongly agree or agree that in a Desmi course the sequence of teaching is to a large extent predetermined.

In question 10k, which has to do with the requirements of Desmes and the degree to which they determine the pace of their teaching, teachers' reports are: 22 in 24 men agree that Desmes' requirements for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of their teaching. 25 in 26 women, 22 in 24 Mathematicians and 25 in 26 Historians also agree. As for the groups of seniority, the situation is the same, as Table 3 below

shows: 22 in 25, 24 in 24, 10 in 11, 25 in 27 and 12 in 12 either strongly agree or agree that Desmes' requirements for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of their teaching.

Teachers' reports in question 10k that we saw above seem to be in contradiction with their reports in question 13. In question 13 teachers had four options and they mainly chose the units' difficulty or students' educational needs and Desmes requirements. Probably here teachers did not want to give the impression that they ignore other educational factors and take into account only Desmes requirements. But in question 10k, where they have to decide whether they agree or not with the statement, they clearly agree that Desmes requirements determine the pace of their teaching.

**Table 3: Desmes, methods, pace and sequence of teaching**

Qs 12, 13, 10/d, 10k	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty	Sen/ty
	Men n= 24	Women n=26	Math/s n=24	Hist/ns n=26	+ schools 1 <sup>st</sup> n=1	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n= 25	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=24	+ Desm. 1 <sup>st</sup> n=11	+ Desm. 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	+ Desm. 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
12. Teaching Desmes means that I choose my methods mainly according to: 1.Desmes req/ments 2.Students' educational needs 3.Units' requirements 4.Other	1. 10	1. 12	1. 10	1. 12	1. 1	1. 11	1. 10	1. 6	1. 11	1. 5
	2. 5	2. 3	2. 5	2. 3	2. 0	2. 5	2. 3	2. 2	2. 6	2. 0
	3. 5	3. 5	3. 5	3. 5	3. 0	3. 3	3. 7	3. 2	3. 4	3. 4
	4. 4	4. 6	4. 4	4. 6	4. 0	4. 6	4. 4	4. 1	4. 6	4. 3
13. *The pace of teaching mainly depends on: 1.A unit's difficulty 2.Students' educational Needs 3.Desmes req/ments 4.Other	1. 7	1. 10	1. 8	1. 9	1. 1	5. 8	1. 8	1. 5	1. 7	1. 5
	2. 7	2. 2	2. 8	2. 1	2. 0	6. 5	2. 4	2. 2	2. 4	2. 3
	3. 8	3. 9	3. 7	3. 10	3. 0	7. 9	3. 8	3. 3	3. 12	3. 2
	4. 2	4. 5	4. 1	4. 6	4. 0	8. 3	4. 4	4. 1	4. 4	4. 2
10/d ** In a Desmi course the sequence of teaching is to a large extent predetermined.	1. 8	1. 8	1. 4	1. 12	1. 1	1. 9	1. 6	1. 2	1. 12	1. 2
	2. 15	2. 15	2. 18	2. 12	2. 0	2. 14	2. 16	2. 7	4. 15	2. 8
	3. 0	3. 2	2. 0	3. 2	3. 0	3. 2	3. 0	3. 1	5. 0	3. 1
	4. 1	4. 1	3. 2	4. 0	4. 0	4. 0	4. 2	4. 1	6. 0	4. 1
	5. 0	5. 0	4. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	7. 0	5. 0
10/k **The req/ments of Desmes for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of my teaching to a large extent.	1. 5	1. 7	1. 3	1. 9	1. 0	6. 8	1. 3	1. 3	1. 7	1. 2
	2. 17	2. 18	2. 19	2. 16	2. 0	7. 14	2. 21	2. 7	2. 18	2. 10
	3. 2	3. 1	3. 2	3. 1	3. 0	8. 3	3. 0	3. 1	3. 2	2. 0
	4. 0	4. 0	4. 0	4. 0	4. 0	9. 0	4. 0	4. 0	4. 0	3. 0
	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 1	10. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	4. 0

\*here the respondents only had one choice

\*\* 1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

## **Aim of teaching**

**As teachers report, the goal set by them is to meet the requirements of Desmes (preparation for the General exams) and make students capable of succeeding in them (Q 19 of the interview):**

*...The main aim is for students to learn History, if possible by heart, in order to be able to answer the questions in the General exams.... (woman, historian, 13 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

*...in Desmes the aim has to be to teach students the specific amount of things necessary in order to be able to succeed in the exams....(woman, history, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)*

*...my aim is to teach students some things in order for them to be able to succeed in the General exams, I do not like it but I have to...(man, mathematician, 23 years at school, 14, years in Desmes)*

*...In essence, my aim is to cover the syllabus, there are a lot of gaps in students' education and time is fixed...The first and foremost aim is to be consistent with the requirements of the General exams. Good preparation and also to arouse the interest of those who are not interested in the exams...(man, mathematician, 12 years at school, 12 years in Desmes)*

With respect to the issue of control of teachers' labour process by the educational authorities, teachers think that this does not apply. To be more specific, as Table 4 shows, in the statement (Q 10/f) «the Administration sends to school a form asking me to specify what I have already taught (number of page). This is an attempt at controlling my work», teachers' answers are mainly divided between «neutral» and «disagree». More specifically, 8 in 24 men are neutral and 9 in 24 disagree. 13 in 26 women also disagree and 6 in 26 are neutral. 10 in 24 Mathematicians disagree and 6 in 24 are neutral. 12 in 26 Historians disagree and 8 in 26 are neutral. The same tendency can be identified in the groups of seniority: 10 in 25 disagree and 9 in 25



are neutral, 12 in 24 disagree and 5 in 24 are neutral, 6 in 11 disagree, 12 in 27 disagree and 7 in 27 are neutral, and 5 in 12 are neutral and 4 in 12 disagree.

From the above reports, teachers seem to believe that the form sent to them by the Administration cannot be seen as an attempt at controlling their work. This view is confirmed by the reports in the next statement (Q 10/g) on whether they take the form seriously into account. The tendency here is the same as that in Q 10/f above, namely between “neutral” and “disagree”. As concerns men, 9 in 24 are neutral, 7 in 24 disagree and 6 in 24 strongly disagree. Women are divided among: “neutral” (8 in 26), “disagree” (7 in 26) and “agree” (8 in 26). Mathematicians are divided between “neutral” (8 in 24) and “disagree” (8 in 24). Historians are divided among “neutral” (9 in 26), “agree” (8 in 26) and “disagree” (6 in 26). We can see here that in the women’s case, who are mainly Historians, in contrast to men/ mathematicians, there can be identified a small group of teachers who agree and take the form seriously into account.

On seniority, it can be said that their reports range from “agree” to “strongly disagree”. In most cases it can be said that when we ignore “neutral” and add up the first two answers (strongly agree and agree) and the two last ones (disagree and strongly disagree), the general view is negative, namely, teachers do not agree that they take the form seriously into account: 13 in 25, 10 in 24, 12 in 27, 6 in 12.

Teachers do not agree with statement 10h that «the form is a source of stress». In particular, 10 in 24 men are negative (they disagree or strongly disagree) and 9 in 24 are neutral. 9 in 26 women are negative, 7 in 26 neutral and 9 in 26 are positive (they strongly agree and agree). 10 in 24 Mathematicians are negative, 7 in 24 are neutral and 7 in 24 are positive. 10 in 26 Historians are negative and 9 in 26 are neutral. The same tendency can be identified in the groups of seniority. In the second group of teachers (seniority and schools), 10 in 25 are negative, 6 in 25 neutral and 9 in 25 positive. In the third group, 10 in 24 are negative about the stress which the form causes, 10 in 24 are neutral and 9 in 24 positive. In the first group concerning seniority and Desmes, 6 in 11 are negative and 4 in 11 positive. In the second group, 12 in 27 are neutral, 8 in 27 negative and 7 in 27 positive. In the third one, 6 in 12 are negative and 3 in 12 neutral. From the above reports, it can be said

that the form is not taken very seriously into account and that it is not seen as a form of stress.

In general, in the above reports we cannot identify any differentiations between sexes, specialisations and seniority groups and, consequently, we cannot consider the parameters of gender, specialisation and seniority as determining teachers' working experiences.

**Table 4: Control of teaching**

Qs 10/f,g,h	Gender Men n= 24	Gender Women n=26	Spec/on Math/s n=24	Spec/on Hist/ns n=26	Senio/ty + schools 1 <sup>st</sup> n=1	Senio/ty + schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n= 25	Senio/ty + schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=24	Sen/ty + Desm. 1st n=11	Sen/ty + Desm. 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	Sen/ty + Desm. 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
10/f The Administration sends to school a form asking you to specify what you have already taught (number of page). This is an attempt at controlling your work.	1. 0 2. 3 3. 8 4. 9 5. 4	1. 2 2. 5 3. 6 4. 13 5. 0	1. 2 2. 3 3. 6 4. 10 5. 3	1. 0 2. 5 3. 8 4. 12 5. 1	1. 0 2. 1 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 2 2. 4 3. 9 4. 10 5. 0	1. 0 2. 3 3. 5 4. 12 5. 4	1. 1 2. 2 3. 2 4. 6 5. 0	1. 0 2. 5 3. 7 4. 12 5. 3	1. 1 2. 1 3. 5 4. 4 5. 1
10/g I take the form seriously into account.	1. 0 2. 2 3. 9 4. 7 5. 6	1. 0 2. 8 3. 8 4. 7 5. 3	1. 0 2. 2 3. 8 4. 8 5. 6	1. 0 2. 8 3. 9 4. 6 5. 3	1. 0 2. 1 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 0 2. 6 3. 6 4. 7 5. 6	1. 0 2. 3 3. 11 4. 7 5. 3	1. 0 2. 5 3. 1 4. 5 5. 0	1. 0 2. 4 3. 11 4. 5 5. 7	1. 0 2. 1 3. 5 4. 4 5. 2
10/h The above form is usually a source of stress.	1. 0 2. 5 3. 9 4. 6 5. 4	1. 2 2. 7 3. 7 4. 7 5. 3	1. 2 2. 5 3. 7 4. 7 5. 3	1. 0 2. 7 3. 9 4. 6 5. 4	1. 0 2. 1 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 2 2. 7 3. 6 4. 7 5. 3	1. 0 2. 4 3. 10 4. 6 5. 4	1. 0 2. 4 3. 1 4. 6 5. 0	1. 2 2. 5 3. 12 4. 4 5. 4	1. 0 2. 3 3. 3 4. 3 5. 3

1. strongly agree, 2.agree, 3. neutral, 4.disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

## Sources of stress

An important issue to stress is that although the majority of teachers report that Desmes restrict their autonomy, they do not report this «lack of autonomy», as Table 5 below shows (Q 24/a), as a source of much or extreme stress. It is rather the «students' indifference to school» (Q 24/b) and the «lack of time to do their work as they would like» (Q 24/e) which are reported as sources of much and extreme stress. More analytically, only 5 in 24 men, 4 in 26 women, 2 in 24 Mathematicians and 7 in 26 Historians consider «lack of autonomy» as a source of much or extreme stress. As for the groups of seniority, 6 in 25, 3 in 24, 2 in 11, 7 in 27 and 0 in 12 report that lack of autonomy is a source of much or extreme stress.

As Table 5 indicates, students' indifference to school is considered by teachers as a source of much and extreme stress. More specifically, 13 in 24 men, 18 in 26 women, 13 in 24 Mathematicians and 18 in 26 Historians report that students' indifference to school is a source of much or extreme stress. As for the groups of seniority, the reports are: 16 in 25, 14 in 24, 7 in 11, 19 in 27, 5 in 12 say that students' indifference to school is a source of much or extreme stress.

The problem of lack of time to do their work as they would like is also considered by teachers a source of much or extreme stress. To be more concrete, 14 in 24 men think that it is a source of much or extreme stress, 12 in 26 women think of it as a source of much or extreme stress and 8 in 26 as a source of moderate stress. 14 in 24 Mathematicians report it as a source of much or extreme stress and 6 in 24 as a source of moderate stress. 12 in 26 Historians say that lack of time is a source of much or extreme stress and 8 in 26 a source of moderate stress. According to the parameter of seniority, teachers report on lack of time as a source of stress as follows: 13 in 25, 13 in 24, 7 in 11, 11 in 27 much or extreme stress, 9 in 27 moderate stress and from the last group, 8 in 12 much or extreme stress.

**Table 5: Sources of stress**

Q 24	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men n= 24	Women n=26	Math/s n=24	Hist/ns n=26	+ schools 1 <sup>st</sup> n=1	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n= 25	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=24	+ Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=11	+ Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	+ Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
a) Lack of autonomy	1. 7	1. 4	1. 9	1. 2	1. 0	1. 4	1. 7	1. 3	1. 4	1. 4
	2. 7	2. 11	2. 7	2. 11	2. 0	2. 8	2. 10	2. 2	2. 11	2. 5
	3. 5	3. 7	3. 6	3. 6	3. 1	3. 7	3. 4	3. 4	3. 5	3. 3
	4. 3	4. 3	4. 2	4. 4	4. 0	4. 3	4. 3	4. 2	4. 4	4. 0
	5. 2	5. 1	5. 0	5. 3	5. 0	5. 3	5. 0	5. 0	5. 3	5. 0
b) Students' indifference to school	1. 3	1. 0	1. 3	1. 0	1. 0	1. 1	1. 2	1. 1	1. 0	1. 2
	2. 4	2. 4	2. 4	2. 4	2. 0	2. 5	2. 3	2. 2	2. 5	2. 1
	3. 4	3. 4	3. 4	3. 4	3. 0	3. 3	3. 5	3. 1	3. 3	3. 4
	4. 10	4. 13	4. 9	4. 14	4. 0	4. 12	4. 11	4. 4	4. 16	4. 3
	5. 3	5. 5	5. 4	5. 4	5. 1	5. 4	5. 3	5. 3	5. 3	5. 2
e) Lack of time to do my work as I would like	1. 2	1. 0	1. 1	1. 1	1. 0	1. 0	1. 2	1. 0	1. 2	1. 0
	2. 2	2. 6	2. 3	2. 5	2. 1	2. 5	2. 2	2. 0	2. 5	2. 2
	3. 6	3. 8	3. 6	3. 8	3. 0	3. 7	3. 7	3. 3	3. 9	3. 2
	4. 9	4. 8	4. 9	4. 8	4. 0	4. 10	4. 7	4. 6	4. 8	4. 4
	5. 5	5. 4	5. 5	5. 4	5. 0.	5. 3	5. 6	5. 2	5. 3	5. 4

1. no stress, 2. mild stress, 3. moderate stress, 4. much stress, 5. extreme stress.

### Degree of satisfaction

As for the degree of satisfaction from teaching Desmes, the general picture is not a positive one because less than half of the teachers are fairly satisfied or satisfied. More analytically: 10 in 24 men, 12 in 26 women, 10 in 24 Mathematicians and 12 in 26 Historians are fairly satisfied or satisfied. As for the groups according to seniority: 13 in 24 are fairly satisfied, 8 in 24 are fairly satisfied, 5 in 11 are fairly satisfied or satisfied, 14 in 27 are fairly satisfied and 3 in 12 are fairly satisfied or satisfied.

**Table 6: Degree of satisfaction from Desmes**

<b>Q 25</b> How satisfied are you with teaching Desmes?	<b>Gender</b>  <b>Men</b> n= 24	<b>Gender</b>  <b>Women</b> n=26	<b>Spec/on</b>  <b>Math/s</b> n=24	<b>Spec/on</b>  <b>Hist/ns</b> n=26	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + schools <b>1st</b> n=1	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + schools <b>2<sup>nd</sup></b> n= 25	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + schools <b>3<sup>rd</sup></b> n=24	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + Desmes <b>1st</b> n=11	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + Desmes <b>2<sup>nd</sup></b> n=27	<b>Senio/ty</b>  + Desmes <b>3<sup>rd</sup></b> n=12
1. Very dissatisfied	1. 2	1. 1	1. 2	1. 1	1. 0	1. 0	1. 3	1. 0	1. 0	1. 3
2. Fairly dissatisfied	2. 3	2. 4	2. 2	2. 5	2. 0	2. 2	2. 5	2. 1	2. 5	2. 1
3. Neither	3. 9	3. 9	3. 10	3. 8	3. 0	3. 10	3. 8	3. 5	3. 8	3. 5
4. Fairly satisfied	4. 7	4. 12	4. 7	4. 12	4. 0	4. 13	4. 6	4. 4	4. 14	4. 1
5. Very satisfied	5. 3	5. 0	5. 3	5. 0	5. 1	5. 0	5. 2	5. 1	5. 0	5. 2

From the interviews we had:

**In general most teachers (9 in 12) are not satisfied with their job (Q 15 of the interview):**

*...I am not satisfied. There is no interest on the part of the students. I do not get any moral satisfaction...their educational background is too poor... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...I cannot say that I am satisfied because the school's educational facilities and working conditions are not satisfactory...nobody wants to teach in a frozen classroom in winter or a classroom which is such an eyesore... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

**Teachers think that the contribution of Desmes to their dissatisfaction is significant and they also report that before the system of Desmes (and the transitional period of two years) the situation was better (Q 16 of the interview):**

*...The fact that some students are obliged to choose a Desmi although they are not interested in the entrance exams causes problems to my work. Most of them are indifferent and noisy... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)*

*Thus Desmes do have a negative impact upon my teaching process and the degree of satisfaction...Personally, I have been under a lot of stress, I have no choices...In History, although time is enough, students are not interested in learning something more... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*No, Desmes do not give me any satisfaction. I would prefer them to be abolished...Desmes play a negative role as far as job satisfaction is concerned... (man, mathematician, 23 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

**All teachers (12) report that the students' educational background plays the main role in making them unhappy (Q 17 of the interview):**

*...I would be satisfied if the students' educational background was better...Personally, I love my job, but now I am very disappointed. I offer much more than I get... (woman, historian, 16 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...if students are not interested, then they are not cooperative either, and this is not helpful...The students' background plays a role, but it is not unrelated to the broader social conditions... (woman, historian, 20 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

*...when the students' educational background is good, your work is more relaxed, in the sense that you can do something more. On the contrary, when it is poor you need more time... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

Teachers are not satisfied, but they, nevertheless, see some positive aspects in teaching Desmes. In Q 28 (20 in 50 did not respond), it is reported that students are more interested and cooperative in Desmes than in Core subjects and that the syllabus is also interesting.

*... the working conditions are better (compared to those of Core subjects), classes are smaller so teachers can work in a more effective way... (man, mathematician, 14 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...the syllabus is interesting and students are more interested in Desmes, compared to Core subjects, because they are interested in the General exams... (woman, historian, 11 years in school, 9 years in Desmes).*

As far as the negative aspects of Desmes are concerned, these are:

*...Standardization and «industrialization» of work, stress to cover the syllabus...(man, mathematician, 14 years in schools, 6 years in Desmes)*

*... the negative impact of frontistiria, students' interest more in frontistiria than in the school... (man, mathematician, 12 years in schools, 9 years in Desmes)*

The above views expressed in response to Q 28 are reported by: 7 in 12 men, 11 in 18 women, 6 in 11 Mathematicians and 12 in 19 Historians. According to seniority: 9 in 14, 8 in 15, 4 in 6, 10 in 19 and 3 in 5.

### Positive and negative aspects of teaching Desmes

**Table 7: Teaching Desmes: Positive and Negative aspects**

Q 28	Gender Men	Gender Women	Spec/on Math/s	Spec/on Hist/ns	Sen/ty + schools 1 st	Sen/ty + schools 2 nd	Sen/ty + schools 3 rd	Sen/ty + Desmes 1 st	Sen/ty + Desmes 2 nd	Sen/ty + Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Positive/ Negative Aspects of Desmes	(12) 7	(18) 11	(11) 6	(19) 12	(1) 1	(14) 9	(15) 8	(6) 4	(19) 10	(5) 3

\* The numbers within the brackets show the number of respondents after the deduction of those who did not answer this specific question. The number outside the brackets signifies the views of the majority of respondents.

## The crisis of Lycea

The majority of teachers report that the Lyceum is in crisis and this is explained as part of a general socio-economic crisis. In particular, the teachers who agree that the Lyceum is in crisis are: 23 in 24 men, 24 in 26 women, 23 in 24 Mathematicians and 24 in 26 Historians. As for the seniority groups, those who agree are: 24 in 25, 23 in 24, 11 in 11, 24 in 27 and 11 in 12. As for the reasons, they report that the said crisis is part of a socio-economic crisis. This is reported by: 21 in 24 men, 21 in 26 women, 21 in 24 Mathematicians and 20 in 26 Historians. As for the seniority groups: 24 in 25, 23 in 24, 10 in 11, 22 in 27 and 9 in 12 report as above.

**Table 8: The crisis of the Lyceum**

Qs 34, 35	Gender		Gender		Spec/on		Spec/on		Sen/ty		Sen/ty		Sen/ty		Sen/ty		Sen/ty		Sen/ty	
	Men	n= 24	Women	n=26	Math/s	n=24	Hist/ns	n=26	1st	n=1	2 <sup>nd</sup>	n= 25	3 <sup>rd</sup>	n=24	1st	n=11	2 <sup>nd</sup>	n=27	3 <sup>rd</sup>	n=12
34. Do you think that the Lyceum is in crisis?	1.	23	1.	24	1.	23	1.	24	1.	1	1.	24	1.	23	1.	11	1.	24	1.	11
	2.	1	2.	2	2.	1	2.	2			2.	1	2.	1	2.	0	2.	3	2.	1
35. *																				
1. The crisis of the Lyceum is part of a socio-economic crisis	1.	21	1.	21	1.	21	1.	20	1.	1	1.	24	1.	23	1.	10	1.	22	1.	9
2. The crisis is the outcome: of the existence of frontesteria	2.	2	2.	3	2.	1	2.	2			2.	1	2.	1	2.	1	2.	2	2.	1
3. Of teachers' poor education	3.	0	3.	2	3.	1	3.	1									3.	1	3.	1
4. Other	4.	1			4.	1	4.	3									4.	2	4.	1

1. Yes, 2. No \* the respondents only had one choice.

## Students' Views on Teachers' Autonomy

Now let us see students' views on teachers' work. Before this we will present the students' profile, which can be described as follows: five of them read books,



seventeen go to the cinema very often, while four go to the theatre very often. Finally, the majority of them (19 in 24) attend frontistrio and a few (3 in 24) have private lessons.

The views of students on issues of Desmes and their teachers' autonomy indicate the following: all students (24) report that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy because they have to invest all their energy in the exams requirements. Students report that the teachers' task is to prepare them for the General exams. For them a «good» teacher is the one who makes the syllabus easy to grasp and can communicate in the classroom.

More specifically, their reports from the semi-structured interview we had are as follows:

**All students agree with teachers and believe that the Desmes system restricts teachers' autonomy (Q 8):**

*...teachers are under a lot of pressure by the limited amount of time, they must cover a concrete part of the syllabus specified by the Ministry within a specific time context...their autonomy is restricted by the exams requirements and needs...there is also the pressure of competition...*

**It is reported by 19 in 24 students that the teachers' role and aim has to be a «frontistirial» one, which means that they have to prepare them for the exams (Q 1):**

*...They have to make the lesson simple, easy to understand and to prepare us for the exams...To give us knowledge so that we are able to cope with the General exams...To teach the syllabus and also to finish it in time...*

**The majority of students (20 in 24) do not think that they gain something more, although they would like to, except preparation for the exams. Desmes are exam-oriented (Q 5):**

*...it would be better to be taught more things, but it is difficult since we are preparing for the exams. It is not useful [to get more knowledge, not necessary for exams]. Teachers try to give us more, but we are unresponsive...we only take what is necessary for the exams, everything happens within the spirit of the exams...there is no time for anything more, and there is also the psychological pressure of the exams...at this moment it is not useful for us to deal with something else... everything is sacrificed to the exams, time is too limited, all our efforts are directed towards the General exams...*

In short, all students agree that the Desmes system has to be changed because it is soul-destroying, as it is intensely exam-oriented, whereas Core subjects (comprehensive education) come second; in fact, they are, as reported, *a play-time*.

### **Frontesteria**

#### **Teachers' Views**

We now turn to the third hypothesis, which has to do with the role of frontesteria in structuring teachers' labour process. Teachers, as we see in Table 8, tend to disagree or strongly disagree that frontesteria come second in preparing students for entering Higher education (Q 17/a). They report that students pay more attention to frontesteria than to their work at school (Q 17/b) and that frontesteria have a negative influence on their work at school (Q 17/c).

More specifically, those who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement in Q 17a are: 18 in 24 men, 13 in 26 women, 17 in 24 Mathematicians and 14 in 26 Historians. According to their group of seniority, teachers mostly report that they disagree or strongly disagree: 18 in 25, 12 in 24, 8 in 11, 15 in 27 and 8 in 12. As for Q 17b, 21 in 24 men, 20 in 26 women, 20 in 24 Mathematicians and 21 in 26 Historians strongly agree or agree. According to their group of seniority, the teachers who strongly agree or agree are 19 in 25, 21 in 24, 8 in 11, 23 in 27 and 10 in 12. Those who strongly agree or agree with the statement in Q 17c are: 11 in 24 men, 16 in 26 women, 12 in 24 Mathematicians and 15 in 26 Historians. There is a substantial number of teachers who are neutral to this statement (5 men, 7 women, 3

Mathematicians and 9 Historians). According to their group of seniority, teachers strongly agree or agree as follows: 16 in 25, 10 in 24 (7 neutral), 7 in 11, 16 in 27 (6 neutral) and 4 in 12 (4 neutral).

**Table 9: Frontesteria**

Qs 17/a, b, c	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men n=24	Women n=26	Math/s n=24	Hist/ns n=26	+ schools 1 <sup>st</sup> n=1	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=25	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=24	+ Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=11	+ Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=27	+ Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=12
17/a Frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing students for entering Higher education.	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0
	2. 2	2. 7	2. 2	2. 7	2. 0	2. 2	2. 7	2. 0	2. 7	2. 2
	3. 4	3. 6	3. 5	3. 5	3. 0	3. 5	3. 5	3. 3	3. 5	3. 2
	4. 16	4. 11	4. 15	4. 12	4. 0	4. 15	4. 12	4. 7	4. 13	4. 7
	5. 2	5. 2	5. 2	5. 2	5. 1	5. 3	5. 0	5. 1	5. 2	5. 1
17/b Students pay more attention to frontesteria.	1. 6	1. 5	1. 4	1. 7	1. 1	1. 6	1. 4	1. 3	1. 6	1. 2
	2. 15	2. 15	2. 16	2. 14	2. 0	2. 13	2. 17	2. 5	2. 17	2. 8
	3. 3	3. 4	3. 3	3. 4	3. 0	3. 5	3. 2	3. 2	3. 4	3. 1
	4. 0	4. 2	4. 1	4. 1	4. 0	4. 1	4. 1	4. 1	4. 0	4. 1
	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0
17/c. The existence of frontesteria causes problems to teachers' work.	1. 4	1. 3	1. 4	1. 3	1. 1	1. 2	1. 4	1. 1	1. 2	1. 4
	2. 7	2. 13	2. 8	2. 12	2. 0	2. 14	2. 6	2. 6	2. 14	2. 0
	3. 5	3. 7	3. 3	3. 9	3. 0	3. 5	3. 7	3. 2	3. 6	3. 4
	4. 6	4. 3	4. 7	4. 2	4. 0	4. 4	4. 5	4. 2	4. 3	4. 4
	5. 2	5. 0	5. 2	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 2	5. 0	5. 2	5. 0

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree

As teachers characteristically say about the role of frontesteria (Qs 36 of the questionnaire and 22 of the interview):

*...I do not think that frontesteria facilitate my work, rather the opposite, I would say, because most of the times students use them as an excuse to claim that they do not have enough time to do their homework...students pay more attention to frontesteria and sometimes parents come and see me saying 'why did you mark him with 10 since he got 18 at the frontistirio?'... (man, mathematician, 23 years at*

school, 14 years in Desmes)

*...most students think that they have learnt the syllabus at the frontistirio, but in fact this is not true...from this point of view, frontesteria complicate the school's task... (man, historian, 15 years at school, 10 years in Desmes)*

*...students believe that it is the frontistirio which will prepare them for the exams and not the school... (man, mathematician, 15 years at school, 13 years in Desmes)*

In general, it can be said that teachers think that frontesteria play a negative role as far as their work is concerned. In particular, the role of frontesteria (Q 36) is considered by most of them (10 teachers did not respond) as negative, but at the same time they are seen as necessary, a «necessary evil», as it is characteristically reported.

*... they affect teachers' work negatively, to the extent that we have to «prove» that our work is not inferior compared to that of frontesteria... (man, mathematician, 12 years in schools, 12 in Desmes )*

*...students pay more attention to them, in the students' mind school comes second. There is a latent competition between school and frontesteria and students tend to deify frontesteria teachers ... (woman, historian, 8 years in schools, 5 in Desmes)*

### **Similarities and differences with schools**

The similarities and differences in the work done at school and frontesteria are described by teachers as follows (Qs 22 and 23, which eleven teachers did not answer).

The similarities between teachers teaching Desmes at schools and those at frontesteria are reported to be:

*... there is the same aim, the preparation for the General exams...(man,*

mathematician) ... *the same syllabus*... (woman, historian, 12 years in schools, 12 years in Desmes).

More analytically, the above views are shared by 15 in 19 men, 16 in 20 women, 15 in 18 Mathematicians and 18 in 21 Historians. According to seniority, 12 in 17, 16 in 21, 4 in 6, 17 in 22 and 6 in 11 are of the same opinion.

The differences are reported to be as follows:

*... at school we do more an in-depth analysis of mathematical concepts, whereas at frontesteria teachers do more exercises* (man, mathematician, 15 years in schools, 11 years in Desmes)...

*...Frontesteria also standardise knowledge*... (man, mathematician, 14 years in schools, 9 in Desmes).

*...At school there is more personal contact with students. Teachers at frontesteria, it is said, have more prestige in the students' eyes* ... (woman, historian, 8 years in schools, 5 years in Desmes).

In particular, the above differences were reported by 15 in 19 men, 16 in 20 women, 15 in 18 Mathematicians and 18 in 21 Historians. According to seniority, the above differences are described by 14 in 20, 11 in 18, 3 in 5, 19 in 25 and 5 in 9 teachers.

**Table 10: Frontesteria: similarities and differences with schools**

Qs 22,23	Gender Men	Gender Women	Spec/on Math/s	Spec/on Hist/ns	Sen/ty + schools 1 <sup>st</sup>	Sen/ty + schools 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sen/ty + schools 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sen/ty + Desm. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Sen/ty + Desm. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sen/ty + Desm. 3 <sup>rd</sup>
2. Teachers at frontesteria / Similarities	(19) 15	(20) 16	(18) 15	(21) 18	(1) 1	(17) 12	(21) 16	(6) 4	(22) 17	(11) 6
3. Teachers at Frontesteria / Differences	(19) 15	(20) 16	(18) 15	(21) 18	(1) 1	(20) 14	(18) 11	(5) 3	(25) 19	(9) 5

\* The numbers within the brackets show the number of respondents after the deduction of those who did not answer the specific question. The number outside the brackets signifies the majority of respondents.

It is clear from the teachers' answers that frontesteria, in most cases, cause teachers' work problems because students devote all their energy and attention to them. The only differentiation refers to the need of attending frontesteria. In general, it is reported that frontesteria offer students a standardised kind of knowledge, which does not apply in the case of school. Teaching at frontistirio, they say, means that the essence of teaching is coverage of the syllabus rather than the quality of teaching; this is not the case in schools.

### Students' Views

**Almost all students (except one) attend frontesteria and they agree that frontesteria are necessary (Qs 2, 4):**

*...they are necessary, the school cannot meet the exams requirements...teaching is not good at school and, as a result, the frontistirio is necessary...because there is not enough time or zeal at school, the frontistirio is necessary...there is a feeling of insecurity, so the frontistirio is necessary...it is an additional aid...it is a different type of work, we do more exercises there which are necessary for the exams...it is necessary because the level required in the General exams is high...*

**Almost all students (21 in 24) think that teachers at frontesteria are better, more careful and caring (Q 3):**

*...the work done at frontesteria is better, classes are smaller...at school, because it is a state school, teachers are relaxed, they do not make much effort to help students...at frontesteria teachers are more conscientious... the teachers' aim at frontesteria is students' success in the General exams. This does not happen at schools, because they know that we attend frontistirio...there is more time at frontistirio, so teachers are not under stress...*

*...teachers at frontesteria are accountable to the owners and to students. Students pay so they have high demands ...at frontesteria teaching is adjusted to the student's needs... at school teachers take it for granted that we attend frontesteria, thus they do not care if we have questions...*

In other words, as the above findings indicate, frontesteria have a negative impact on teachers' work at school because students spend a lot of their time there - at the expense of school work - and also students always compare the two groups of teachers, so teachers at schools must always take this into account. In a sense, this means that they have a feeling that they can exert no control. So, teachers themselves experience two forms of control: the official one, exercised by the educational authorities and a non-official one, namely that of frontesteria. This can be inferred from the following answers:

*...they [frontesteria] standardise knowledge and try to impress students... (woman, historian, 12 years in schools, 10 years in Desmes)... As businesses they are carrying out propaganda against schools.. . ( woman, historian, 15 years in schools, 14 years in Desmes).*

In sum, from their reports it is clear that teachers share a feeling of being in a secondary position in their students' minds compared to their colleagues at frontesteria. However, they tend to think that they do another type of work, which is "superior". There seems to be general agreement that the centre and focus of students' interest is frontesteria.

As far as students' perceptions of frontesteria are concerned, they see teachers at frontesteria playing the main role in their preparation for the exams, as this is their aim. At this point, students' answers seem to confirm our view that teachers at schools believe that preparation for the exams plays the dominant role in frontesteria, as it is notably said:

*...the teachers' aim at frontesteria is students' success in the General exams, which is not the case at schools because teachers take it for granted that we attend frontistirio... (student, 1<sup>st</sup> Lyceum of Keratsini)*

From the students' reports, it seems to be clear that teachers at schools take into account the fact that most students attend frontesteria and, consequently, their work is organised and structured accordingly.

To recapitulate

The above presented findings tend to support our first and third hypotheses. To be more specific, the first hypothesis concerning the fact that teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process are restricted by the system of Desmes seems to be confirmed by all the participants, teachers and students alike.

The same can be also said about our third hypothesis concerning the role of frontesteria on structuring teachers' labour process at school. Frontesteria, as all the participants indicate, play a negative role for teachers' work, since the work of teachers at school is being structured by the work done at frontesteria. The frontesteria cannot be ignored by state school teachers since almost all students attend them and pay more attention to them.

The second hypothesis concerning the role of the parameters of gender, specialisation and seniority of teachers in determining and affecting their working experiences is not confirmed. This means that our findings do not show any noteworthy variations as far as the above parameters are concerned.



## 6.2 Middle/upper class areas

As we saw in the previous section, in order to address the first hypothesis we collected data from teachers (questionnaires and semi structured interviews) and students (semi structured interviews). Our findings from the middle/upper class areas are the following:

### Teachers' Views

#### Issues of autonomy and control

As for the issues of autonomy and control related to predetermined and standardised curricula (Table 1), teachers report that "generally speaking, a prescribed curriculum means that the teachers' autonomy and control are restricted" (Q 10/a). More specifically, 13 in 25 men, 17 in 25 women, 14 in 28 Mathematicians and 16 in 22 Historians strongly agree or agree with statement 10/a. As for the groups of seniority, the picture is the following: 28 in 48, 4 in 4, 7 in 15 and 19 in 31 strongly agree or agree.<sup>62</sup>

**Table 1: Teachers' Autonomy and the Curriculum**

Q 10	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men	Women	Math/ns	Hist/ns	+	+	+	+	+
	n=25	n=25	n=28	n=22	schools	schools	Desmes	Desmes	Desmes
					2nd**	3rd***	1 <sup>st</sup>	2nd	3 <sup>rd</sup>
					n=2	n=48	n=4	n=15	n=31
Generally speaking, a predetermined curriculum restricts the teachers' autonomy and control.	1. 3	1. 5	1. 2	1. 6	1. 0	1. 8	1. 1	1. 4	1. 3
	2. 10	2. 12	2. 12	2. 10	2. 2	2. 20	2. 3	2. 3	2. 16
	3. 5	3. 1	3. 5	3. 1	3. 0	3. 6	3. 0	3. 4	3. 2
	4. 7	4. 6	4. 8	4. 5	4. 0	4. 13	4. 0	4. 4	4. 9
	5. 0	5. 1	5. 1	5. 0	5. 0	5. 1	5. 0	5. 0	5. 1

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree

\*\*2<sup>nd</sup> group: teachers with 7-12 years at school. In middle/upper class areas all teachers have more

<sup>62</sup> In this section, the presentation of the findings, we will not refer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> group of teachers

than six years of teaching at school. There is no 1<sup>st</sup> group as in the case of working class areas.

\*\*\*3<sup>rd</sup> group: teachers with more than 13 years at school. The same categorisation is used for the case of teaching Desmes.

### **Desmes and autonomy**

As for the issue of Desmes and autonomy, the general picture is that teachers see them as “standardised courses which do not restrict their autonomy” (Q 14 of the questionnaire) and, in general, it is reported that teaching Desmes can be said to “stimulate teachers’ creativity and encourage intervention” (Q 11 of the questionnaire). Table 2 below presents the pattern of their reports in detail: we can see from the table that 17 in 25 men, 14 in 25 women, 20 in 28 Mathematicians and 11 in 22 Historians think that Desmes stimulate their creativity and intervention.

As for the groups according to seniority, these report: 30 in 48, 1 in 4, 10 in 15 and 21 in 31 teachers say that Desmes stimulate their creativity and intervention. Here we see that the majority of teachers (3 in 4) think that Desmes restrict their autonomy. It is the group which does not have many years of experience in Desmes. Another interesting finding is that a noteworthy group of teachers (10) think that Desmes have no impact on their autonomy.

In Q 14 teachers respond that Desmes are standardised courses but do not restrict their autonomy. More specifically, this is reported by 15 in 25 men, 19 in 25 women, 20 in 28 Mathematicians and 14 in 22 Historians. According to seniority, 32 in 48, 2 in 4, 12 in 15 and 20 in 31 teachers share the above view.

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concerning their experience in schools, because its population is too small (2 teachers).

**Table 2: Desmes and autonomy**

Qs 11,14*	Gender Men n=25	Gender Women n=25	Spec/on Math/s n =28	Spec/on Hist/ns n =22	Senio/ty + schools 2nd n=2	Senio/ty + schools 3rd n=48	Senio/ty + Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=4	Senio/ty + Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=15	Senio/ty + Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=31
11. Teaching Desmes can be said to:									
1. restrict teachers' autonomy	1. 7	1. 7	1. 5	1. 9	1. 0	1. 14	1. 3	1. 4	1. 7
2. stimulate creativity and intervention	2. 17	2. 14	2. 20	2. 11	2. 1	2. 30	2. 1	2. 10	2. 21
3. have no impact	3. 1	3. 4	3. 3	3. 2	3. 1	3. 4	3. 0	3. 2	3. 3
14. Desmes are:									
1. standardised courses which restrict teachers' autonomy	1. 5	1. 5	1. 3	1. 7	1. 0	1. 10	1. 2	1. 3	1. 5
2. are not standardised	2. 5	2. 1	2. 5	2. 1	2. 0	2. 6	2. 0	2. 0	2. 6
3. are standardised but do not restrict teachers' autonomy	3. 15	3. 19	3. 20	3. 14	3. 2	3. 32	3. 2	3. 12	3. 20

\* the respondents only had one choice.

### Resistance and Desmes

More specifically, teachers' views on Desmes and the issues of autonomy (Qs 13, 14, 25, 26), as they were expressed in the semi structured interviews we had, are the following:

**It is reported that Desmes do not restrict teachers' autonomy** (Q 14 of the interview):

*...I think teaching depends on the teacher's personal responsibility; if you do not want to confine yourself, you can go beyond the limits of the given*

*syllabus...(man, mathematician, 27 years at school, 10 years in Desmes)*

*...every year I discover new things to teach, there is no boredom. Because of the General exams, I try to give students many things, I go beyond the syllabus...(man, mathematician, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...in each chapter you can teach a lot of things. Students are not very demanding but I challenge them, I introduce discussions, I always say more, it is necessary if you want to stimulate students' interest...for those teachers who think that Desmes restrict their autonomy, I have to say that it is an excuse when you do not want to work...(woman, historian, 15 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...I cannot confine myself to the pages of the book, time is enough. History includes very interesting chapters, the syllabus is very limited, only 134 pages, so you have the chance to teach more. There is no routine, we try to combine the General exams with more general knowledge, we expand on various issues. You can move beyond the syllabus, there is plenty of time... (woman, historian, 21 years at school, 12 years in Desmes)*

*...there is a wide spectrum of knowledge within which you can move, so it is the syllabus which is important, but you also have students' "stamina". You know that their educational level is satisfactory and, consequently, you can deal with extreme intellectual issues... (man, mathematician, 18 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...before Desmes things were the same, the only difference was that we had a different syllabus. Personally, I have not felt any difference... (man, mathematician, 19 years at schools, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...there was no difference [before Desmes], it is a matter of personal conscience and of teaching aims. Before Desmes I used to teach the same way... (woman, historian, 20 years at schools, 14 years in Desmes)*

**Most teachers (8 in 12) report that it is not easy to resist the**

**requirements of Desmes, but they try to go beyond them and they succeed (Q 26 of the interview):**

*...You cannot ignore Desmes. You must teach everything about them and then you may say something more or something different, you cannot forget Desmes' requirements but they do not restrict you. You teach for all students, you are not a teacher at a frontistirio. You have to take into account the exams because students want to succeed in them. But it also depends on the teacher's zeal to give more. You have to open your mind and go beyond preparation for the university. Although the education system does not demand it, it is necessary. I do what I like, within the specific context, I am very inventive. It is difficult to forget the exams, but if you are capable and have a real desire, then you can give more...it is necessary to go beyond the given syllabus...students' background is good, they come from upper class families and for this reason they have the chance to have private lessons, they have libraries, books, their parents care about them...*

(woman, historian, 23 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

### **Students' educational background and demands**

**All teachers argue that the students' educational background is more important for their teaching than the curriculum (Q 28):**

*...the students' educational background plays an important role. Satisfaction depends on the students' interests and also on the teacher's offer. Surely, the students' educational background counts 60% and the teacher's zeal 40%. When they have a good background, you can teach more...* (man, mathematician, 19 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

**Students, as reported by most teachers (9 in 12), are demanding (Q 31):**

*...They want you, no doubt, to know everything. You must always be well-prepared and ready to answer all their questions. Students want you to give extra-curricular things...they want you to go beyond sterile, non-productive knowledge. You cannot "survive" by giving them only commonplace things...(man,*

mathematician, 27 years at school, 10 years in Desmes)

*...it is a fundamental issue; in order to "stand" in the classroom, you have to give something different, otherwise students will ignore you...*(man, mathematician, 19 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

**And in cases where this is not happening, it is said that when teachers first start giving something more, then students follow:**

*...They follow me, but I do not know whether they will remember it for ever. There are really clever students but there are also some who are not interested. I usually take the initiative in teaching something more. If I did not start first, they would not press me. I start first and then when they see that it is useful and interesting they keep notes. Usually they demand what is necessary, but you can always intervene...* (man, historian, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

#### **Evaluation of teachers' work**

**Most teachers (10 in 12) think that their work is evaluated through Desmes (Q 30):**

*...Yes, this does happen. There are students and parents complaining about the teachers' quality of work. They ask the head teacher whether he/she can change them.*

*...Not in a direct way, but generally speaking, yes. Certainly. However, schools play a minor role, compared with frontesteria, and, consequently, failure or success depends less on the school's performance. Unfortunately, this is the case. It would not be sincere to argue the reverse...* (man, historian, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

### **Methods, pace and sequence of teaching**

Teachers here do not choose their teaching methods according to the requirements of Desmes. In detail, the picture is the following: 7 in 25 men, 5 in 25 women, 6 in 28 Mathematicians and 6 in 22 Historians choose their methods according to the requirements of Desmes. This view is shared by teachers according to their seniority as follows: 11 in 48, 2 in 4, 6 in 15 and 4 in 31 do not choose their teaching methods according to the requirements of Desmes.

Concerning the pace of their teaching, neither this depends on Desmes. More specifically, only 4 in 25 men, 4 in 25 women, 4 in 28 Mathematicians and 4 in 22 Historians report that the requirements of Desmes affect their pace of teaching. In the seniority groups the above view is shared by 8 in 48, 3 in 4, 3 in 15 and 2 in 31 teachers. Here we see that the group which does not have many years of experience in Desmes takes their requirements into account.

sequence of teaching, this is reported to be predetermined to a large extent (Q 10/d). More specifically, those who strongly agree or agree are: 24 in 25 men, 24 in 25 women, 27 in 28 Mathematicians and 21 in 22 Historians. This view is also prevalent in teacher groups according to seniority: 46 in 48, 4 in 4, 14 in 15 and 30 in 31 teachers share it.

In Q 10/k, which refers to the requirements of Desmes and the pace of teaching, teachers' views seem to contradict those given in Q 13, which also refers to the pace of their teaching. More specifically, those who strongly agree or agree that the requirement of Desmes for coverage of the syllabus determines the pace of their teaching are: 22 in 25 men, 21 in 25 women, 25 in 28 Mathematicians and 18 in 22 Historians. As for the groups of seniority, 41 in 48, 4 in 4, 14 in 15 and 25 in 31 teachers agree with the above. The contradiction between the two statements, we think, has to do with the fact that as teachers they think that they have to take into account factors such as a unit's difficulty. Hence, they choose it when they are required. This difference, we think, shows that, in the long run, what comes first is the requirements of Desmes and not a unit's difficulty.

**Table 3: Desmes, methods, pace and sequence of teaching**

Qs 12, 13, 10/d, 10/k	Gender Men n=25	Gender Women n=25	Spec/on Math/ns n=28	Spec/on Hist/ns n=22	Senio/ty + schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=2	Senio/ty + schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=48	Senio/ty + Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=4	Senio/ty + Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=15	Senio/ty + Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=31
12. *Teaching Desmes means that I choose my teaching methods mainly according to:									
1. Desmes' req/ments	1. 7	1. 5	1. 6	1. 6	1. 1	1. 11	1. 2	1. 6	1. 4
2. Students' educ. needs	2. 4	2. 5	2. 5	2. 4	2. 1	2. 8	2. 1	2. 2	2. 6
3. the unit's req/ments	3. 10	3. 5	3. 10	3. 5	3. 0	3. 15	3. 0	3. 1	3. 14
4. other	4. 4	4. 10	4. 7	4. 7	4. 0	4. 14	4. 1	4. 6	4. 7
13. *The pace of teaching mainly depends on:									
1. the unit's difficulty	1. 9	1. 8	1. 9	1. 8	1. 1	1. 16	1. 1	1. 5	1. 11
2. students' educ. needs	2. 7	2. 6	2. 8	2. 5	2. 1	2. 12	2. 0	2. 2	2. 11
3. Desmes' req/ments	3. 4	3. 4	3. 4	3. 4	3. 0	3. 8	3. 3	3. 3	3. 2
4. Other	4. 5	4. 7	4. 6	4. 6	4. 0	4. 12	4. 0	4. 5	4. 7
10/d **In a Desmi course the sequence of teaching is to a large extent predetermined.	1. 10	1. 11	1. 11	1. 10	1. 1	1. 20	1. 0	1. 6	1. 15
	2. 14	2. 13	2. 16	2. 11	2. 1	2. 26	2. 4	2. 8	2. 15
	3. 1	3. 0	3. 1	3. 0	3. 0	3. 1	3. 0	3. 0	3. 1
	4. 0	4. 1	4. 0	4. 1	4. 0	4. 1	4. 0	4. 1	4. 0
	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0
10/k **The requirements of Desmes for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of my teaching to a large extent.	1. 6	1. 6	1. 6	1. 6	1. 1	1. 11	1. 1	1. 7	1. 4
	2. 16	2. 15	2. 19	2. 12	2. 1	2. 30	2. 3	2. 7	2. 21
	3. 1	3. 1	3. 1	3. 1	3. 0	3. 2	3. 0	3. 1	3. 1
	4. 2	4. 2	4. 2	4. 2	4. 0	4. 4	4. 0	4. 0	4. 4
	5. 0	5. 1	5. 0	5. 1	5. 0	5. 1	5. 0	5. 0	5. 1

\*here the respondents had one choice.

\*\*1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree.



## **Aim of teaching**

Teachers say (9 in 12) that the first goal set by teachers is to meet the requirements of the General exams and the second is to offer something more (Q 19):

*...Certainly my aim is for students to get as much knowledge as possible with a further view to succeeding in the exams. It is a great pleasure for us to see as many students as possible succeeding. In addition - this is my main interest - my goal is to give students a sense that I gave them something more, especially to those students not interested in the entrance exams... (woman, historian, 21 years in school, 12 years in Desmes)*

*...the first goal is the training of logic, the mathematical way of thinking. Desmes is only the framework within which I have to work...(man, mathematician, 20 years in school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...I want to foster their logic, their way of thinking. To stimulate them to search further, by themselves, to read books, to synthesise...(man, mathematician, 19 years in school, 14 in Desmes)*

*...My aims are broader than those prescribed by the curriculum. It is to form a historical criterion, which is not always easy or feasible, but I try. To be able to distinguish concepts and then to analyse and synthesise things... (woman, historian, 20 years in school, 14 years in Desmes).*

## **Control over teaching**

As for the issue of control over teachers' labour process, it is reported that there is no such control. More specifically, Q 10/f states that "the Administration sends to school a form asking you to specify what you have already taught (number of page). This is an attempt at controlling your work". Those who strongly disagree or disagree with the above statement are: 19 in 25 men, 16 in 25 women, 19 in 28 Mathematicians and 16 in 22 Historians. The teachers who also strongly disagree or disagree, according to seniority in schools and Desmes, are: 34 in 48, 2 in 4, 9 in 15 and 23 in 31.

Those who strongly agree or agree with the statement that they take the said form seriously into account (Q 10/g) are: 8 in 25 men, 9 in 25 women, 7 in 28 Mathematicians and 10 in 22 Historians. According to seniority, 17 in 48, 2 in 4, 7 in 15 and 8 in 31 strongly agree or agree. The form is not a source of stress for them (Q 10/h). More specifically, as can be seen in Table 4 which follows, 3 in 25 men, 1 in 25 women, 3 in 28 Mathematicians and 1 in 22 Historians strongly agree or agree. According to seniority, 4 in 48, 1 in 4, 2 in 15 and 1 in 10 strongly agree or agree.

**Table 4: Control over teaching**

Qs 10/f,g,h	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men	Women	Math/ns	Hist/ns	+	+	+	+	+
	n=25	n=25	n=28	n=22	schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=2	schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=48	Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=4	Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=15	Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=31
10/f The Administration sends a form to school asking you to specify what you have already taught (number of page). This is an attempt at controlling your work.	1. 2	1. 3	1. 3	1. 2	1. 1	1. 4	1. 1	1. 2	1. 2
	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0	2. 0
	3. 4	3. 6	3. 6	3. 4	3. 0	3. 10	3. 1	3. 4	3. 5
	4. 12	4. 8	4. 11	4. 9	4. 0	4. 20	4. 1	4. 6	4. 13
	5. 7	5. 8	5. 8	5. 7	5. 1	5. 14	5. 1	5. 3	5. 11
10/g I take the form seriously into account.	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0
	2. 8	2. 9	2. 7	2. 10	2. 0	2. 17	2. 2	2. 7	2. 8
	3. 5	3. 10	3. 7	3. 8	3. 1	3. 14	3. 1	3. 4	3. 10
	4. 8	4. 3	4. 9	4. 2	4. 0	4. 11	4. 1	4. 2	4. 8
	5. 4	5. 3	5. 5	5. 2	5. 1	5. 6	5. 0	5. 2	5. 5
10/h The above form is usually a source of stress.	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0
	2. 3	2. 1	2. 3	2. 1	2. 0	2. 4	2. 1	2. 2	2. 1
	3. 6	3. 6	3. 4	3. 8	3. 0	3. 12	3. 1	3. 1	3. 10
	4. 10	4. 12	4. 13	4. 9	4. 1	4. 21	4. 1	4. 10	4. 11
	5. 6	5. 6	5. 8	5. 4	5. 1	5. 11	5. 1	5. 2	5. 9

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree

## Sources of stress

A point which, we think, needs to be stressed is that although the majority of teachers report that Desmes restrict their autonomy, they do not report this "lack of autonomy" (Q 24/a) as a source of stress. More specifically, "lack of autonomy" is considered a source of much or extreme stress by: 6 in 25 men, 3 in 25 women, 4 in 28 Mathematicians and 5 in 22 Historians. According to seniority, 7 in 48, 2 in 4, 2 in 15 and 5 in 31 teachers strongly agree or agree with the above statement. For them it is rather the "students' indifference to school" (Q 24/b) which is a source of much or extreme stress. More specifically, students' indifference to school is considered as a source of much or extreme stress by: 14 in 25 men, 13 in 25 women, 14 in 28 Mathematicians and 13 in 22 Historians. According to seniority, it is considered as a source of much or extreme stress by: 26 in 48 (for 10 in 48 it is a source of moderate stress), 4 in 4, 10 in 15 and 13 in 31 (for 8 in 31 it is a source of moderate stress).

The "lack of time to do their work as they would like" (Q 24/e) is not considered as much a source of stress as in the case of working class areas. More analytically, it is reported as a source of much or extreme stress by: 5 in 25 men, 6 in 25 women, 4 in 28 Mathematicians and 7 in 22 Historians. But here it should be stressed that an important number of teachers see it as a source of moderate stress (10 men, 9 women, 10 Mathematicians and 9 Historians). According to seniority groups, lack of time is seen as a source of much or extreme stress by 11 in 48, 1 in 4, 6 in 15 and 4 in 31 teachers. Also an important number of teachers see it as a source of moderate stress (19 in 48, 6 in 15 and 12 in 31).

**Table 5: Sources of stress**

Q 24	Gender Men  n=25	Gender Women  n=25	Spec/on Math/s  n=28	Spec/on Hist/ns  n=22	Senio/ty + schools  2nd n=2	Senio/ty + schools  3rd n=48	Senio/ty + Desmes  1st n=4	Senio/ty + Desmes  2nd n=15	Senio/ty + Desmes  3rd n=31
a) Lack of autonomy	1. 10 2. 7 3. 2 4. 6 5. 0	1. 11 2. 6 3. 5 4. 3 5. 0	1. 13 2. 9 3. 2 4. 4 5. 0	1. 8 2. 4 3. 5 4. 5 5. 0	1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 2 5. 0	1. 21 2. 13 3. 7 4. 7 5. 0	1. 0 2. 0 3. 2 4. 2 5. 0	1. 7 2. 4 3. 2 4. 2 5. 0	1. 14 2. 9 3. 3 4. 5 5. 0
b) Students' indifference to school	1. 1 2. 5 3. 5 4. 8 5. 6	1. 3 2. 3 3. 6 4. 11 5. 2	1. 2 2. 6 3. 6 4. 8 5. 6	1. 2 2. 2 3. 5 4. 11 5. 2	1. 0 2. 0 3. 1 4. 1 5. 0	1. 4 2. 8 3. 10 4. 18 5. 8	1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 4 5. 0	1. 1 2. 1 3. 3 4. 6 5. 4	1. 3 2. 7 3. 8 4. 9 5. 4
e) Lack of time to do my work as I would like to	1. 7 2. 3 3. 10 4. 5 5. 0	1. 4 2. 6 3. 9 4. 4 5. 2	1. 9 2. 5 3. 10 4. 4 5. 0	1. 2 2. 4 3. 9 4. 5 5. 2	1. 1 2. 1 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 10 2. 8 3. 19 4. 9 5. 2	1. 1 2. 1 3. 1 4. 0 5. 1	1. 1 2. 2 3. 6 4. 5 5. 1	1. 9 2. 6 3. 12 4. 4 5. 0

1. no stress, 2. mild stress, 3. moderate stress, 4. much stress, 5. extreme stress

### Degree of satisfaction

As for the degree of satisfaction from teaching Desmes, the general picture is a positive one. Namely most teachers are fairly satisfied or satisfied. In particular, fairly satisfied and satisfied are: 14 in 25 men, 16 in 25 women, 16 in 28 Mathematicians and 14 in 22 Historians. According to seniority, the figures are: 30 in 48, 3 in 4, 9 in 15 and 18 in 31.

**Table 6: Degree of satisfaction from Desmes**

<b>Q 25</b>	<b>Gender Men n=25</b>	<b>Gender Women n=25</b>	<b>Spec/on Math/s n=28</b>	<b>Spec/on Hist/ns n=22</b>	<b>Senio/ty + schools 2<sup>nd</sup> n=2</b>	<b>Senio/ty + schools 3<sup>rd</sup> n=48</b>	<b>Senio/ty + Desmes 1<sup>st</sup> n=4</b>	<b>Senio/ty + Desmes 2<sup>nd</sup> n=15</b>	<b>Senio/ty + Desmes 3<sup>rd</sup> n=31</b>
How satisfied are you with teaching Desmes?									
1. Very dissatisfied	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0	1. 0
2. Fairly dissatisfied	2. 1	2. 6	2. 1	2. 6	2. 1	2. 6	2. 0	2. 2	2. 5
3. Neither	3. 10	3. 3	3. 11	3. 2	3. 1	3. 12	3. 1	3. 4	3. 8
4. Fairly satisfied	4. 11	4. 14	4. 13	4. 12	4. 0	4. 25	4. 3	4. 7	4. 15
5. Very satisfied	5. 3	5. 2	5. 3	5. 2	5. 0	5. 5	5. 0	5. 2	5. 3

**In the interviews we had, teachers report that they are satisfied with their job (Q 15):**

*...Yes, I am satisfied; students themselves are the source of my satisfaction. I like my job very much, what I do not like are the working and economic conditions. It is a terrible feeling to have a sense that you are non-privileged. It was my personal choice to become a teacher at a state school, so I would be alienated if did not offer all I can...(man, historian, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

**Most teachers (9 in 12) think that Desmes do not play a particular role in making them happy (Q 16):**

*...I do not think that I feel happy because of Desmes. I simply see Desmes as a different type of curriculum. I cannot say that there is a strong connection between Desmes and satisfaction. No, it is not because of Desmes, I myself am the one who plays the key role... (man, mathematician, 19 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

**All of them argue that the students' educational background plays an important role in making them happy (Q 17):**

*...The students' educational background plays an important role. Satisfaction*

*depends on the students' interests and also on the teacher's offer. Surely, students' educational background counts for 60% and the teachers' zeal for 40%. When they have a good background, you can teach more... ( man, mathematician, 19 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

### **Positive and negative aspects of Desmes**

**Teaching Desmes has its positive and negative aspects** (Q 28, which 20 in 50 teachers did not answer).

The positive aspects which make them want to teach Desmes are considered: *...the possibility of creating things...*(man, mathematician, 27 years in schools, 14 years in Desmes)*...students who are interested in learning...*(man, mathematician, 20 years in school, 10 in Desmes)*...the fact that you can teach a lot of things beyond the textbook...*(woman, Historian, 17 years in schools, 12 years in Desmes)

The negative aspects of teaching Desmes teachers are reported to be: *...knowledge for the exams and not for its own value...*(man, mathematician, 18 years in schools, 14 years in Desmes) *...school is becoming a preparatory centre for the exams...*(woman, historian, 17 years in schools, 14 years in Desmes ).

The above views are reported by: 11 in 15 men, 12 in 15 women, 10 in 15 Mathematicians and 11 in 15 Historians. According to seniority, the figures are: 22 in 29, 1 in 2, 5 in 8 and 14 in 20.

**Table 7: Teaching Desmes: Positive and Negative aspects**

Q 28	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Seni/ty	Seni/ty	Seni/ty	Seni/ty	Seni/ty
	Men	Women	Math/s	Hist/ns	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup>	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup>	+ Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup>	+ Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup>	+ Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Positive/ negative aspects of Desmes	(15)*11	(15) 12	(15) 10	(15) 11	(1) 1	(29) 22	(2) 1	(8) 5	(20) 14

\* The numbers within the brackets show the number of respondents after the deduction of those who did not answer the specific question. The number outside the brackets signifies the views of the majority of the respondents.

### **The crisis of the Lyceum**

The majority of teachers report that the Lyceum is in crisis and this is explained as part of a general socio-economic crisis. More analytically, the teachers who agree that the Lyceum is in crisis are: 23 in 25 men, 24 in 25 women, 25 in 28 Mathematicians and 22 in 22 Historians. As for the seniority groups, 45 in 48, 4 in 4, 15 in 15 and 27 in 31 teachers agree. As for the reasons, they report that the crisis is part of a socio-economic crisis. This is reported by: 20 in 25 men, 21 in 25 women, 22 in 28 Mathematicians and 19 in 22 Historians. As for the seniority groups, the figures are: 39 in 48, 3 in 4, 14 in 15 and 24 in 31.

**Table 8: The crisis of the Lyceum**

Qs 34, 35	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men n= 25	Women n=25	Math/s n=28	Hist/ns n=22	+ schools 2 <sup>nd</sup> n= 2	+ schools 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=48	+ Desmes 1 <sup>st</sup> n=4	+ Desmes 2 <sup>nd</sup> n=15	+ Desmes 3 <sup>rd</sup> n=31
34. Do you think that the Lyceum is in crisis?	1. 23 2. 2	1. 24 2. 1	1. 25 2. 3	1. 22 2. 0	1. 2 2. 0	1. 45 2. 3	1. 4 2. 0	1. 15 2. 0	1. 28 2. 3
35. *									
1. The crisis of the Lyceum is part of a socio-economic crisis	1. 21	1. 21	1. 22	1. 19	1. 2	1. 39	1. 3	1. 14	1. 24
2. It is the outcome of: the existence of frontistiria.	2. 1	2. 2	2. 2	2. 1	2. 0	2. 3	2. 1	2. 1	2. 2
3. Of teachers' poor education.	3. 1	3. 2	3. 1	3. 1	3. 0	3. 2	3. 0	3. 0	3. 2
4. Other	4. 2	4. 0	4. 3	4. 1	4. 0	4. 4	4. 0	4. 0	4. 3

### Students' Views on Teachers' Autonomy

With respect to the students' views on teachers' autonomy, we have found the following:

They report that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy because they have to teach according to the requirements of Desmes. They consider a 'good' teacher to be one who is well-informed, well-educated, master of the subject, knowledgeable and communicative.

Most students (19 in 24) read extra-curricular books and go to the cinema. A few of them (4) go also go to the theatre. Almost all (23) attend frontistirio or private



lessons or both. In particular, seven attend frontistirio, eight have private lessons, and eight both. Their cultural background is clearly higher compared to that in working class areas. In working class areas only 5 in 24 students read extra-curricular books and only 3 in 24 have private lessons.

More specifically, they reported the following:

### **Desmes and autonomy**

**Almost all students (22) agree that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy (Q 8):**

*...they have to teach specific things, within a prescribed context, within limited time, especially teachers of Greek literature, they are more standardised, they cannot give us more, they are restricted by the time...*

**Students' expect teachers, as far as Desmes are concerned, to give them more knowledge, more than textbooks (Q 1):**

*...not to have a public servant's mentality, teaching and leaving, to give us some more knowledge...to be experts in their subject, to be in the position to answer all my questions, capable of "standing" in the classroom...to teach us without focusing on the textbooks, to use other sources as well...I want him/her to go further, not to focus on the textbooks, not to take into account that we attend frontistirio...he/she has to teach above the average, he/she should not teach according to the average level of the class...*

**A "good" teacher to them (19 in 24) is a teacher who is well-informed, master of the subject and communicative (Q 15):**

*...to have very good knowledge of the subject, be well-informed, conscientious, friendly, unprejudiced ...very good knowledge of the subject, and ability to convey it...*

## **Frontesteria**

### **Teachers' views**

Now we will deal with the third hypothesis, which has to do with the role of frontesteria in structuring teachers' labour process. More specifically, teachers seem to be divided as far as the issue of the role of frontistirio in preparing students for entering Higher education is concerned (Q 17/a). This is not the case in working class areas, where frontesteria are reported to be playing the primary role in preparing students for entering Higher education. It is reported that students pay more attention to frontistiria than to their work at school and that frontesteria cause problems to their work at school. More analytically, as Table 8 below shows:

Men are divided, as 11 in 25 strongly agree or agree. The same is true of women, with 9 in 25 strongly agreeing or agreeing. Almost the same applies to Mathematicians, Historians and all groups of seniority. In particular, 13 in 25 Mathematicians strongly agree or agree; 7 in 25 Historians strongly agree or agree. According to seniority, 20 in 25 strongly agree or agree, 19 in 25 disagree or strongly disagree, 2 in 4 strongly disagree, 7 in 15 and 15 in 31 disagree.

As for Question 17/b, which states that students pay more attention to frontesteria than schools, those who strongly agree or agree are: 20 in 25 men, 16 in 25 women, 20 in 25 Mathematicians and 16 in 25 Historians. According to seniority, 34 in 48, 4 in 4, 11 in 15 and 21 in 31 teachers strongly agree or agree. In the case of Question 17/c, stating that "the existence of frontesteria causes problems to teacher's work", we would say that teachers are almost divided or are neutral. More analytically, 12 in 25 men, 11 in 25 women, 13 in 25 Mathematicians and 10 in 25 Historians strongly agree or agree. As far as seniority is concerned, 23 in 48, 2 in 4, 7 in 15 and 14 in 31 teachers strongly agree or agree with the above statement.

Here we want to note that there seems to be a contradiction between teachers' reports in Question 17/b and those in 17/c. To be more specific, although the view that students pay more attention to frontesteria than to schools is very strong, this is not the case when they refer to problems caused by frontesteria; when they refer to these problems they are divided between a positive and a negative attitude, their view is

not so strong. More specifically, there is a significant number of teachers (15) who report that frontesteria do not cause problems to their work. This is not exactly the case in working class areas. Here the view that frontesteria do not cause problems to teachers' work is weaker compared to that in middle-upper class areas. Eleven (11) teachers report that frontesteria do not cause problems to their work. If we also take into account their reports in Question 17/a, about the role of frontesteria in preparing students for entering Higher education, then we can say that teachers here are divided. More specifically, twenty (20) see frontesteria as not playing the primary role and twenty (20) report that playing a primary role compared with that of schools.

**Table 9: Frontesteria**

Qu. 17/a, b, c	Gender	Gender	Spec/on	Spec/on	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty	Senio/ty
	Men n=25	Women n=25	Math/ns n=28	Hist/ns n=22	+ schools n=2	+ schools n=48	+ Desmes n=4	+ Desmes n=15	+ Desmes n=31
17/a Frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing students for entering Higher education in comparison with schools.	1. 3	1. 2	1. 3	1. 2	1. 0	1. 5	1. 0	1. 0	1. 5
	2. 8	2. 7	2. 10	2. 5	2. 0	2. 15	2. 1	2. 4	2. 10
	3. 3	3. 7	3. 5	3. 5	3. 1	3. 9	3. 1	3. 4	3. 5
	4. 10	4. 8	4. 9	4. 9	4. 0	4. 18	4. 0	4. 7	4. 11
	5. 1	5. 1	5. 1	5. 1	5. 1	5. 1	5. 2	5. 0	5. 0
17/b Students pay more attention to frontesteria than to school.	1. 7	1. 4	1. 7	1. 4	1. 1	1. 10	1. 0	1. 4	1. 7
	2. 13	2. 12	2. 13	2. 12	2. 1	2. 24	2. 4	2. 7	2. 14
	3. 3	3. 6	3. 4	3. 5	3. 0	3. 9	3. 0	3. 3	3. 6
	4. 2	4. 3	4. 4	4. 1	4. 0	4. 5	4. 0	4. 1	4. 4
	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0	5. 0
17/c The existence of frontesteria causes problems to teacher's work.	1. 2	1. 2	1. 2	1. 2	1 0	1. 4	1. 0	1. 1	3
	2. 10	2. 9	2. 11	2. 8	2 0	2. 19	2. 2	2. 6	11
	3. 3	3. 9	3. 5	3. 7	3 0	3. 12	3. 0	3. 6	6
	4. 6	4. 4	4. 6	4. 4	4 1	4. 9	4. 2	4. 2	6
	5. 4	5. 1	5. 4	5. 1	5 1	5. 4	5. 0	5. 0	5

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

<sup>1</sup> Although 23 in 50 is not the majority, we refer to this number as the main tendency because we omit "neutral" and see the positive and negative views which are reported.

**It is reported that frontesteria cause problems to teachers' work (Q 22):**

*...unfortunately, frontesteria cause problems, because students spend too much time there and do not devote enough time to their homework... (woman, historian, 23 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*... it is very difficult to make students trust you as well...[apart from the frontistirio]... many times students distrust teachers, for example, the teacher gives a solution to a problem and they question it, in general, they trust frontistirio, not school... (man, mathematician, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*...frontesteria standardise knowledge and try to make everyone believe that teachers at schools do nothing. I always try to be ahead...we are in a competitive situation, frontesteria accuse schools and schools accuse frontesteria... (woman, historian, 15 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*emphasis on exercises, it cannot be otherwise... (man, historian, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

*..frontistirio gives them the impression that they know everything and they do not pay attention to me, so I have to make greater efforts in order to stimulate their interest...*

*...the guide for students is frontesteria, it is a reality and it is naïve, to say the least, to ignore it... (woman, historian, 20 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)*

The role of frontesteria (Q 36, which thirteen teachers did not answer) is considered to be negative. More specifically, according to teachers' reports, frontesteria are said to:

*...affect teachers' work at school negatively, students have already been taught the unit and are not interested in paying attention to school. Frontesteria standardise knowledge... (man, mathematician, 19 years at schools, 14 years in Desmes ).*

*... students think that they have been taught everything at frontistiria and do not*

*pay attention at school, they trust frontesteria more than schools... (woman, historian, 21 years in schools, 12 years in Desmes ).*

As for the similarities and differences in the work done at school and frontesteria, these are described by teachers as follows (Qs 22, 23; twelve teachers did not answer Question 22 and thirteen Question 23):

The similarities, as can be seen in the table below, that teachers report are:

*...the same aim, namely, preparation for the General exams, and the same syllabus.*

The differences mentioned are:

*...the working conditions: smaller classes, fewer working hours and better salaries at frontesteria. Frontesteria are also considered more organised.*

**Table 10: Frontesteria: similarities to and differences from schools**

Qu. 22,23	Gender Men	Gender Women	Spec/on Math/s	Spec/on Hist/ns	Seni/ty + schools 2nd	Seni/ty + schools 3rd	Seni/ty + Desmes 1st	Seni/ty + Desmes 2nd	Seni/ty + Desmes 3rd
Teachers at frontesteria (similarities)	(20) 14	(18) 13	(22) 16	(16) 10	(2) 2	(36) 29	(3) 3	(10) 6	(25) 20
Teachers at frontesteria (differences)	(20) 13	(17) 12	(19) 12	(18) 10	(1) 1	(36) 29	(3) 2	(10) 5	(24) 18

\* The numbers within the brackets show the number of respondents after the deduction of those who did not answer this particular question. The number outside the brackets signifies the views of the majority of the respondents.

It is clear from the teachers' answers that teachers in upper class areas share the same views about frontesteria as teachers in working class areas. That is, they believe that frontesteria, in most cases, cause problems to teachers' work (Q 17/c), because students devote all their energy, time and attention to them (Q 17/b). The above view is shared by both sexes, all specialisations and different groups of seniority. The only differentiation occurs in relation to the necessity of attending frontesteria. More

specifically, teachers teaching History argue that frontesteria are not necessary in the case of History, because the syllabus is not extensive and can be effectively taught at school within the specified period of time.

In general, it is reported that frontesteria offer students a standardised kind of knowledge, which does not apply to schools (Q 22). The work done at schools is considered to be more "substantial" compared to that at frontesteria (Q 22).

### **Students' views**

When we examine students' views on the impact of frontesteria on teachers' work, we find that:

**All students get additional help either from frontistirio or/and from private lessons. They report that frontistirio is absolutely necessary (Qs 2, 4):**

*...without frontistirio you cannot approach Universities...it is necessary for training, it also offers psychological support...it is necessary because the syllabus is too long and time is not enough at school...teaching is more systematic at frontesteria...the work done at frontesteria is more serious, they push you to study, you become more responsible...classes are smaller at frontesteria...*

**Teachers at frontesteria are considered better and more interested in their work (Q 3):**

*...teachers at frontesteria are more interested in their work because there is direct control...frontistirio is a business, so if they work properly, they'll make profit...at frontesteria there is more time and fewer students in the classroom...at frontesteria there is also homogeneity [of students' background] in the classroom...teachers at frontesteria are more interested because their job is not permanent, not secure...as far as knowledge is concerned, teachers at schools are better but the working conditions make the difference...teachers at school know that students attend frontesteria and pay more attention to them, so they are not stressed to offer them knowledge..*

### **6.3 School advisors and teacher unionists**

In this section we will present findings concerning the views of School Advisors and Teacher unionists on teachers' autonomy, control of labour process and on the role of frontesteria in structuring teachers' labour process.

As far as the issues of autonomy and control related to predetermined curricula are concerned, in general all School Advisors (4) and Teacher unionists (3) agree that "generally speaking, a predetermined curriculum restricts teachers' autonomy and control".

On Desmes, School Advisors and Teacher unionists report that Desmes are standardised courses and restrict teachers' autonomy. More specifically, School Advisors strongly agree (3 in 4) and Teacher unionists (3 in 3) agree that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy.

## Issues of autonomy and control

**Table1: Teachers' autonomy and the curriculum**

<b>Q 1</b>	<b>School Advisors n=4</b>	<b>Teacher unionists n=3</b>
a) Generally speaking, a predetermined curriculum restricts teachers' autonomy and control.	1. 0 2. 4 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0	1. 0 2. 3 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

**Table: 2 Desmes and Autonomy**

<b>Qs 2,5*</b>	<b>School Advisors n=4</b>	<b>Teacher unionists n=3</b>
2. Teaching Desmes can be said to :	1. 3	1. 0
1. Restrict teachers' autonomy	2. 1	2. 3
2. Stimulate intervention	3. 0	3. 0
3. Have no impact	4. 0	4. 0
	5. 0	5. 0
5. Desmes :		
1. are standardised courses and they restrict autonomy	1. 3	1. 3
2. are not standardised courses	2. 0	2. 0
3. are standardised courses but they do not restrict teachers' autonomy	3. 1	3. 0

\* the respondents only had one choice



### Teaching methods and pace of teaching

As for teaching methods, School Advisors are divided. Half of them (2 in 4) report that teachers teaching Desmes should choose their methods according to Desmes' requirements and the other half say that they should choose their methods according to the units' requirements. Teacher unionists report that teachers should choose their methods according to Desmes requirements.

As for the pace of teaching, half the School Advisors (2 in 4) report that this depends on the requirements of Desmes. In the case of Teacher unionists, all of them agree that the pace of teaching depends on the requirements of Desmes.

**Table 3: Teaching methods, pace of teaching**

Qs 3, 4*	School Advisors n=4	Teacher unionists n=3
-Teachers teaching Desmes should choose teaching methods according to:		
1. Desmes requirements	1. 2	1. 3
2. Students' educational needs	2. 0	2. 0
3. the unit's requirements	3. 2	3. 0
4. other (to be specified)	4. 0	4. 0
-The pace of teaching mainly depends on:		
1. the unit's difficulty	1. 1	1. 0
2. students' educational needs	2. 1	2. 0
3. Desmes requirements	3. 2	3. 3
4. Other (to be specified)	4. 0	4. 0

\* the respondents only had one choice

As for the role of frontesteria, School Advisors and Teacher unionists do not believe that frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing students for entering Higher education. On the contrary, they report that students pay more attention to frontesteria than to school and this causes problems to teachers' work. More specifically, 3 in 4 School Advisors and all Teacher unionists agree that frontesteria cause problems to teachers' work.

**Table 4: Frontesteria**

Q 9	School Advisors	Teacher unionists
	n=4	n=3
a) Frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing students for entering Higher education.	1. 0 2. 0 3. 1 4. 3 5. 0	1. 0 2. 1 3. 0 4. 2 5. 0
b) Students pay more attention to frontesteria than to school.	1. 2 2. 1 3. 1 4. 0 5. 0	1. 0 2. 3 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0
c) The existence of frontesteria causes problems to teachers' work at school.	1. 2 2. 1 3. 0 4. 1 5. 0	1. 0 2. 3 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0

1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree, 5. strongly disagree.

To recapitulate

The above presented findings confirm only the second and third hypotheses; the first hypothesis concerning Desmes and teachers' autonomy is not confirmed. In upper class areas, unlike working class areas, Desmes are not seen as restrictive for teachers' autonomy, although they are characterised as standardised courses by the respondents. On the contrary, they are said to stimulate teachers' interest and

encourage their creativity. This can be identified equally in both sexes, all specialisations and groups of seniority. As for the impact of frontesteria on teachers' work, the respondents have the same view as those in working class areas: frontesteria cause problems to their work because students pay more attention to them than to school.

The second hypothesis, concerning the homogeneity of the process of proletarianisation and the role of the parameters of gender, specialisation and seniority of teachers, is not confirmed. This means that our findings do not show any noteworthy variations as far as the above parameters are concerned. The only parameter which, according to our theoretical scheme, plays a significant role in shaping teachers' labour process is students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. We claim this because our findings are differentiated between the two groups of teachers (working class and middle/upper class areas) and not within the two groups as regards gender, specialisation and seniority.

To summarise

The analysis of the findings indicates the following:

the first hypothesis that: "in Greece a teachers' proletarianisation process has been taking place which involves teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process becoming more restricted" is partially confirmed. We saying "partially" because in middle/upper class areas Desmes are not seen as restrictive for teachers' autonomy, although they are characterised as standardised courses. This can be inferred from the findings: 6.1 and 6.2: Table 2: Desmes and Autonomy as well as teachers' reports (below table 2) on the issues of "Desmes and autonomy" and "resistance and Desmes" (qu. 13, 14, 25, 26 of the interview). Here the two groups of teachers share different views on the issue of teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process.

The second hypothesis that: "the process of proletarianisation is not a homogeneous one and but has a variety of manifestations and there are parameters which shape the variations in modalities of proletarianisation such as: *students' cultural capital*, teachers' *gender*, *specialisation* and *seniority*," is partially confirmed. The only

parameter which plays a significant role in shaping teachers' labour process is *students' cultural capital*. Our findings (6.1, 6.2. Table 2: Desmes and Autonomy) do not show any noteworthy variations as far as the parameters of teachers' *gender*, *specialisation* and *seniority* are concerned.

The third hypothesis that: "frontesteria play a role in structuring teachers' labour process at state school" is confirmed. More specifically, both groups of teachers report that frontesteria play a negative role in structuring their labour process.

Frontesteria, according to the findings (6.1, 6.2. Table 9: Frontesteria), cannot be ignored by state teachers since almost all students attend them and pay more attention to them.

## Chapter 7: Discussion

### Discussion

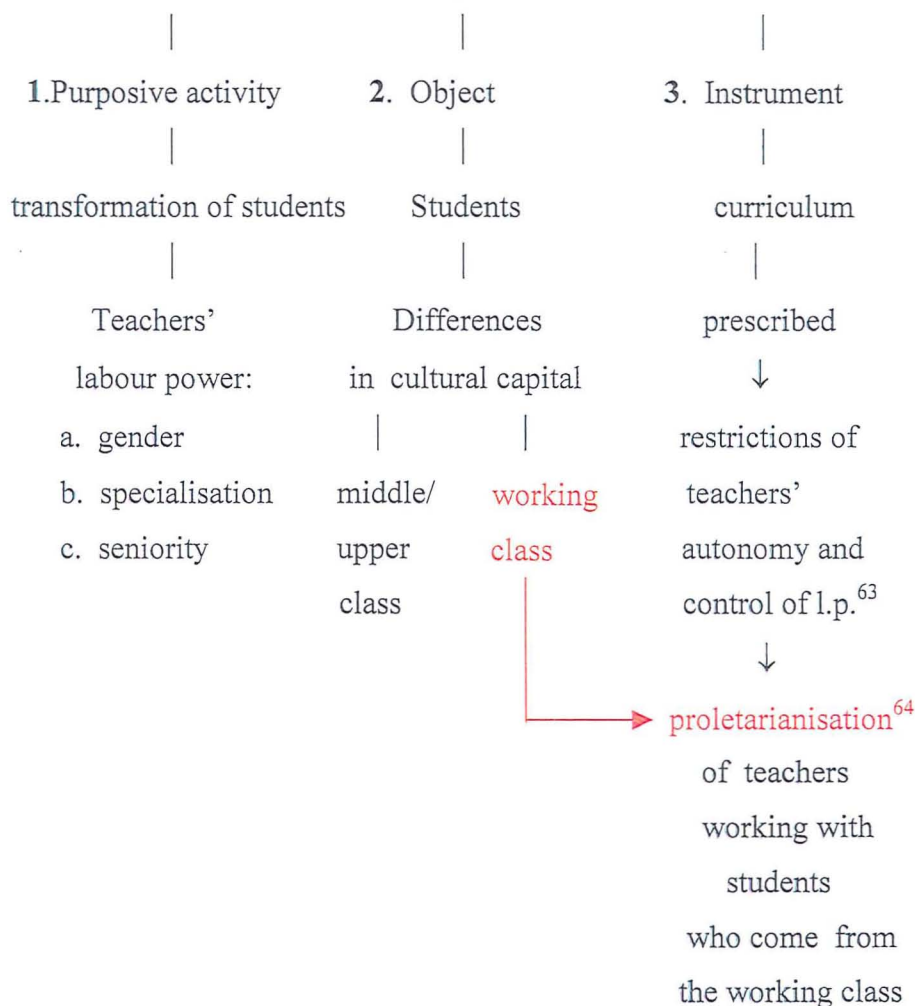
Before we proceed to the discussion of the main trends of the findings it is necessary to remind ourselves of the main theoretical issues we discussed in the second Chapter. These can be classified into two groups: the first group includes the theoretical issues related to the general theoretical agenda of teachers' labour process; the second group includes theoretical issues connected to the specification of these general theoretical issues for the Greek education case.

In the first context, the theoretical issues developed have to do with the constitution of teaching as a labour process and teachers' proletarianisation process, an issue related with the theory of the labour process, as it is argued that teaching is a labour process in which teachers experience controls and pressures from the state. This results in the proletarianisation process, which, in turn, affects teachers' class position.

More specifically, we discussed the idea of redesigning the theoretical pattern of teachers' labour process, that is, the idea that the labour process theory has to reconsider the constitutive elements of teachers' labour process, namely, the means of production and the relations in production. By this we mean that when we study teachers' labour process we have to consider and include as part of their means of production, apart from the curriculum - the main and only means on which this theory generally focuses -, also "students" and, more specifically, "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge. We argue for this because we see these as a unity in the production process. In teaching, the labour process and the production process cannot be separated; they constitute an entity. Neither of these two means of production, the curriculum and "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge, can be seen independently from each other. This is supported by our findings which, as we expected, show us that students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge does make *the* difference as far as teachers' work experiences and the proletarianisation thesis are concerned.

The core of our theoretical discussion on teachers' labour process, as it was analytically developed in the second Chapter, is the following:

### Teachers' labour process: 3 elements (1.2.3)



( — ): means a logical relationship.

( → ): means a casual relationship.

In the diagram teachers' labour process is mapped - according to the Marxist definition of the term "labour process"- as consisting of: relations of production and the relations in production.

<sup>63</sup> l.p.: labour process.

<sup>64</sup> The light grey colour signifies the findings of this study. To be more specific according to our findings teachers who are working with students who come from working class families experience restrictions of autonomy whereas this is not happening to teachers in middle/upper class areas.

The problem with the existing theory of teachers' labour process, we argue, is that this has a simplistic conception of relations *in* production in education. It does not take into consideration the whole set of relations in educational production. We argue this because the labour process theory focuses on and restricts itself only to the level of the relations *of* production which develop between teachers and the curriculum. More specifically, the labour process theory focuses on teachers' proletarianisation process and sees this as a consequence of the introduction of the standardised curricula which restrict teachers' autonomy and control of their own labour process. In this approach, students, the object of teachers' labour process, are neglected and attention is directed only towards the curriculum.

Reid's work (2003)<sup>65</sup> on teachers' labour process makes a promising and timely contribution in that it offers changes in the focus of theoretical argumentation, compared to the previously developed labour process theory in education. In particular, he puts emphasis on the nature and purposes of state control of teachers' labour process. More specifically, he argues that the labour process theory in education needs renovation, particularly, that "attention must be paid to the special contexts and circumstances of education rather than simply 'reading-off' the mainstream labour process debates" (Reid, 2003, p. 4). However, his work, we argue, is characterised by the same deficiencies as those of the established labour process theory.

To be more concrete in Reid's work the factor "students" is mentioned as part of teachers' labour process, but it is not theorised, analysed and developed as a vital part of teachers' work. "Students" as a social category is not analysed. For example, it is not considered whether students constitute a homogeneous social category or not and, if not, what the possible divisions are, such as differences in their cultural capital. The above-mentioned work only refers to students as raw material which "are 'owned' by their parents or care-givers and by the state, in the sense that they are present and future citizens"

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<sup>65</sup> Here we refer to Alan Reid's article "Understanding teachers' work: is there still a place for labour process theory?" (2003, p.16). Here we would like to express many thanks to Alan Reid because he allowed us to read it prior to its publication. The numbers of pages refer to the copy prior



More analytically, Reid uses the concept of “control” in order to examine and reconsider the labour process theory in education, but he does not offer us a detailed conceptual pattern of teachers’ labour process. We argue that before we consider the nature and purposes of state control, we need to have a clear and concrete idea of the nature of the “object” on which the control is exercised, namely, teachers’ labour process. In other words, it is necessary for teachers’ labour process to be conceptualised before we proceed to any kind of discussion of it. We first need to have a conceptual framework of teachers’ labour process in order to address the nature and purposes of state control and the possible consequences for teachers’ work.

The role of state control has to be contextualised within the specific labour process because, as we discussed in the second Chapter, teachers’ labour process is likely to be differentiated in terms of their “object” of work, namely, the students. *Students* is not a homogeneous social category, most particularly because they come from different socio-economic strata. This means that we would expect state control not necessarily to be experienced by all teachers in the same way and, consequently, this means that the structure-curriculum is not perceived by all agents-teachers in the same way. We argue that teachers’ perceptions are mediated by the parameter “students”. Thus, a theory of the labour process has to take into consideration this parameter when developing a perspective concerning the nature of state control. This is the point which differentiates our study from the labour process theory in education which was developed in the ’80s and re-worked more recently in the work of Alan Reid. For us, a renovation of the labour process theory in education involves, first of all, the reconceptualisation of teachers’ labour process, in this respect, in order to develop a new theoretical framework.

This proposed reconceptualisation of teachers’ labour process helps us to research the exercise of state control on teachers’ labour process within differentiated social contexts in relation to students’ social origin (middle/upper class - working class). This perspective would be impossible within the conceptualisation of the labour process theory in education of the ’80s or that of Reid’s recent work. Neither

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to its publication.

approach is able to see sufficiently holistically the set of relations in educational production, namely, the relationship between teachers and the curriculum as mediated by their relations with the students in the processes of educational production.

The importance of Reid's work lies in the fact that it focuses on and stresses the vital role of state control on teachers' labour process in the capitalist social context. State control is a basic condition for ensuring that teachers will fulfill the imperatives of management. It can be argued that the centrality of the concept of control in Reid's work enriches the Marxist scholarship in education, in that he stresses the capitalist character of social relations within which teachers' labour process and work operate. Teachers' labour process and work cannot be conceived of outside the concept of state control and, in the Greek case, of its relations with private control, namely, *frontesteria*, which, as we explained in the Chapter on the Greek case, play a disempowering role. Control is a permanent feature of teachers' labour process in capitalist societies and not a conjunctural one which appears only in times of reorganisation of teachers' labour process, as the labour process theory of the '80s argues, when efforts are made to rationalise public expenditure.

Finally, as far as Reid's work is concerned, we want to argue that he does not relate and discuss the concept of control of the teachers' labour process in affecting and shaping teachers' class position.

More analytically, according to our findings, students with variations in their "cultural capital" is an important factor which causes variations in the way teachers construct their understanding of their work. In other words, we argue for the primacy of the factor "students' cultural capital"<sup>66</sup> in the context of the classroom among the factors of gender, specialisation and seniority of teachers, as the analysis of the data showed in the previous Chapter. The same factor, as our findings indicate, plays the crucial role in teachers' work, either facilitating their coping with standardised curricula in the classroom or hindering their teaching and, in this way,

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<sup>66</sup> "Students' cultural capital": the theoretical category was discussed in ch. 2; here we want to note that we use it as Bourdieu uses it, in order to refer to a wide range of students' attributes such as those manifested in: language use, manners and orientations, *habitus* towards knowledge. More specifically, by this we mean: the *embodied* state in which it can exist, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; and the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods

contributing to a feeling of dissatisfaction. These findings enable us to argue that the structure-standardised curriculum will not necessarily restrict agents-teachers' autonomy. The relationship between structure and agents has to be seen within the particular social context. Hence, the structure-standardised curriculum in working class areas, plays mainly a disabling role in teachers' work, whereas this does not happen in middle/upper class areas.

Thus, as was discussed in the second Chapter and supported by our findings, proletarianisation is a matter which is related to teachers' position in the mode of production, their relationship with their means of production and whether they control them or not. Proletarianisation is a matter which has to do not only with teachers' relations with curricula but also with teachers' relations with their students, an issue which has indeed not been adequately developed in the labour process theory.

Proletarianisation is not a homogeneous process which happens every time teachers face prescribed and standardised curricula; it may have more than one modality. To argue for homogeneity, as the labour process theory does, would mean that vital features of the complexity of the structure of teachers' labour process are not recognised or considered. To be more specific, teachers' labour process, as this was conceptually re-designed above and discussed theoretically in the second chapter, consists of a set of *means of* and *relations in* production; it has to be studied as a complex totality and not as an autonomous abstraction. It is important not to focus partially on the nature of the means called "curriculum" and neglect to theorise the other means of production, namely, "students". By failing to focus on and consider "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge, this theory presents a partial and fragmentary picture of the constitutive elements of teachers' labour process. It fails to see the social parameters of teachers' work. In short, it fails to adequately contextualise it.

What is suggested here is that teachers' labour process should be located not only within the broader socio-economic context, as the labour process theory adequately

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(pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) (Halsey, 1997, p.47).

tends to do, but also within the micro-context, the narrow setting of a classroom, where it takes place daily. A fuller understanding of teachers' labour process can be achieved only when we focus simultaneously on both aspects of it, namely, the means of production – the curriculum and students - and the *relations in production*, namely, the relations of teachers with the curriculum *but as this is mediated by their relations with students*. This is because there can be variations concerning the way teachers experience the restrictions and control of their labour process. These variations have to do with the factor “students' cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge, which, we argue, differentiates teachers as a body of working people. To overlook or avoid considering these possible variations concerning teachers' experience and understanding of their work means either that we assume that students constitute a homogeneous social category and that all teachers work with students who share the same social and educational background, the same dispositions towards knowledge, or that the students' presence makes no difference, as what counts is the nature of the curriculum, which takes priority. Thus, we argue that teachers' labour process has to be re-conceptualised and re-constructed by taking into account the parameter of “students' cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge, as this, according to our findings, shapes teachers' perceptions of their work.

The above perspective is reflected in our findings, where we notice a class-related differentiation between the two groups of teachers, as regards the issue of restrictions imposed by the prescribed curricula, Desmes. More specifically, the majority of teachers in working class areas report (6.1, Table 1) that Desmes restrict their autonomy, whereas the majority of teachers in middle/upper areas do not report such restrictions (6.2, Table 1); on the contrary, they think that Desmes stimulate their professional interest and creativity. Here we can say that students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge plays a role in shaping teachers' working experiences.

These findings are connected with the changes in the Greek system of selection and entrance to Higher education, namely, the implementation of the policy of “Desmes” during the '80s, its effect on the teachers' labour process in Lycea (3<sup>rd</sup> year) and the way this is articulated within the system of relations of production

which include the existence of frontesteria and their contribution to teachers' "disempowerment".

More specifically, the Greek case is one in which prescribed and standardised curricula, called Desmes, were introduced in the Lyceum (3<sup>rd</sup> year). According to the labour process theory, the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula itself restricts teachers' autonomy, as far as the organisation, pacing, timing, sequence of teaching and controls on their labour process by the authorities are concerned, and, therefore, inevitably leads to teachers' proletarianisation, because they are unable to control their daily work, as conception is separated from execution. Thus, we would expect all Greek teachers, irrespective of their "object" of work, namely, students' cultural capital and disposition towards knowledge, to be proletarianised because of the standardised and prescribed character of the curriculum, of Desmes. In short, we would expect all teachers to understand the restrictive character of Desmes on their daily work in the same way. However, this is not the case, as our findings indicate.

The above findings raise two issues: the relationship between structure and agents and that of teachers' class position. As for the first issue, our findings support our theoretical discussion in the second Chapter that the structure cannot be studied independently of the agents to whom it refers. This means that it has to be contextualised within the socio-historical context where it belongs. Thus, we see that in working class areas the structure-curriculum tends to play a restrictive role, which is not the case in middle/upper class areas. As for the issue of teachers' class position, according to our findings we can say that the two groups of teachers do not share the same work conditions.

More specifically, their object - "students" - come from different socio-economic environments. Teachers in working class areas are not able to control their labour process because they have to do with prescribed curricula and students from working class families whose *habitus* towards knowledge does not help them to face the restrictions imposed by the standardised curricula. This does not happen with teachers in middle/upper class areas whose students' *habitus* towards knowledge helps them to face the restrictive character of the standardised curricula.

The above finding is important because it shows that “students” constitutes a crucial element of the means of production for teachers, which mediates, shapes and differentiates the teachers’ perceptions of work. Hence, in the first case it can be said that teachers are being proletarianised because they experience restrictions imposed by the prescribed curricula, Desmes. In the second case, this cannot be said to apply because teachers do not experience any restrictions, even though they report that Desmes can be considered as standardised curricula (6. 2, Table 2). Here, proletarianisation is not facilitated. The above finding indicates that a process of class reproduction is under way. This is because teachers in working class areas cannot help students to go beyond the restrictions imposed by Desmes and, in this way, “overcome” the narrow educational horizon of their class origin. This does not happen in middle/upper class areas where teachers in cooperation with students can neutralise Desmes’ restrictions and go beyond the narrow context of the exams requirements dictated by Desmes.

Our findings show that it is mainly the teachers working in working class areas, where students’ cultural capital is “poor” and their *habitus* towards knowledge negative<sup>67</sup>, who experience the restrictions on their autonomy imposed by Desmes. As the findings indicate, the majority of teachers working in middle/upper class areas do not experience any restrictions at all; on the contrary, they report that Desmes stimulate their interest and encourage their creativity. In other words, the findings indicate that students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge does make a difference in the way teachers perceive a standardised and prescribed curriculum and plays a decisive role in shaping teachers’ work conditions in each group.

The majority of teachers in working class areas are aware of the restrictive character of Desmes in their daily work and express this clearly in their answers to Question 14, where most of them report that Desmes restrict their autonomy. The same cannot be unambiguously said for teachers working in middle/upper class

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<sup>67</sup> We characterise the particular *habitus* “negative” in order to contrast this with that of students in upper class areas who are demanding as far as the provision of knowledge beyond the standardised curriculum is concerned.

areas. In middle/upper class areas, Desmes are characterised, by the majority of the respondents, as standardised and prescribed curricula but, the majority of them report, that they do not restrict their autonomy (Q 14), a view which also applies to the period before Desmes (Q 25 of interview). The standardised curriculum, Desmes, along with students' poor cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, restrict teachers' autonomy in working class areas and make it difficult to resist the requirements of Desmes or go beyond them (Qs 11 of the questionnaire and 31 of the interview). In this case, as Wrigley (2003, p.92) argues, "teachers and pupils become so concerned with covering the syllabus that they fail to construct from it *their* curriculum, their set of meanings..."

In short, as Riley (2002, p. 62) notes, "the pressure to meet, the requirements of national testing and evaluation sits uneasily with the wish to engage the hearts and minds of all young people whether aspiring or disaffected".

Human agency, in our case, the majority of teachers working with students who come from middle/upper class environments, can meet the requirements of Desmes and also go beyond them. This happens, we argue, because students' *habitus* towards knowledge as structure offers them the opportunity to do that. In the working-class case, Desmes, along with students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, play mainly a disabling role in teachers' efforts to do things they would like to. At this point we can notice that there is a number of teachers, in working class areas, who report that they do not experience any restrictions by Desmes. In short, it can be said that there are cases where human agency succeeds in the efforts to go beyond Desmes. The reverse is true in the middle/upper-class case, where the curriculum-Desmes is said to enable the majority of teachers to do things. Thus, in the working-class case the relationship between teachers and students, as one aspect of the relations in production, is shaped, according to our theoretical discussion and the diagram at the beginning of this Chapter, by who controls the "frame" (namely, what can be transmitted and what not). In this case, it can be said that those who control it are the state educational authorities, through the standardised curriculum, Desmes, and the students, through their cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. Both participants, teachers and students, tend to follow the requirements of Desmes but nothing more. In short, the control of the relations in production lies outside the labour process of teachers and is with the

state *and* the students.

In the middle/upper-class case, the relationship between teachers and students is shaped by teachers who control, to a certain extent, what can be transmitted and what not. We say "to a certain extent" because the relations in production can be negotiated between teachers and students. Also, we should not forget that Desmes are prescribed curricula with specific requirements, namely, the preparation for entrance exams to Higher education, so it is extremely difficult for teachers to totally neglect the requirements of Desmes. This is clear in their reports that whenever they try to introduce something more or something different, their students follow them (Q 31 of the interview with teachers).

As we have seen, teachers from both groups agree that, generally speaking, prescribed curricula restrict teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process and contribute to their proletarianisation; they also agree that Desmes fall within the category of prescribed and standardised curricula. Although most of them agree in the definition of Desmes as standardised curricula (6.1, Table 2, 6.2 Table 2) and the effects which, generally speaking, this could have on their work, nevertheless, the majority of teachers in middle/upper class areas do not report that Desmes restrict their autonomy and creativity. This means that the working conditions are different for the two groups of teachers. More specifically, what differentiates them is the object of their work, namely, students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge; the instrument, the curriculum, is the same. Then, what are the factors which make them differentiate themselves from the teachers in working class areas? The differentiating factor, we argue, can be found in their "means of production" and, more specifically, in the "object" of their work, which is students' dispositions to school knowledge.

The factor "students" makes the difference, because these come from two different socio-economic backgrounds, which means that they have different cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge and teaching. To be more specific, in working class areas, although teachers report that they try to go beyond Desmes, students resist and do not want to follow them. As they characteristically report:



*...the students themselves resist if a teacher changes the focus...it is easy to resist only when students' educational background is good and there is also an interest...students want to learn the specific syllabus in a specific way for the exams...they do not want to get more...( woman, historian, 16 years in schools, 11 years in desmes)*

Thus, it becomes clear that the leading role in shaping teachers' work experiences is not played by the standardised character of the curriculum *itself*, but by students' educational demands and interests, which are related to their cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge and depend on the class position of their families. This can be also confirmed by the fact that in Question 28 of the interviews, the one about the importance of the curriculum and students' cultural capital for their work, both groups of teachers reported that students' cultural capital is more important than the curriculum. More specifically, they maintain that "students' cultural capital" is *the* factor which helps them to resist restrictions imposed by prescribed curricula and work as they would like.

As it is characteristically repeated:

*...it does not matter how much prescribed a curriculum is if you have good material [students]...*

This helps us to explain why teachers in middle/upper class areas do not see Desmes as restricting for their autonomy, although they report that Desmes are standardised curricula.

In a few cases, teachers in middle/upper class areas tend to explain the non-restrictive character of Desmes by referring to their own personal capabilities. They report:

*...you have to take into account the exams because pupils want to succeed in them. But it also depends on the teacher's zeal to give more...I'm very inventive. It is difficult to forget the exams but if you are capable and have a real desire then you*

*can give more...*(woman, historian, 23 years at schools, 14 years in Desmes)

However, in answering Question 31 of the interview about whether their students are demanding, the teachers report that when they are not demanding you can first start giving something more and students will follow. This clearly tells us that the crucial parameter which makes the difference between teachers in the two areas, as far as their work experiences are concerned, is “students’ cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge.

Thus, when we examine teachers’ labour process and work experiences we have to take into consideration the relations *of* and the relations *in* production. In other words, we should consider that teachers’ means of production is not only the curriculum but also, as the empirical work shows, “students’ cultural capital” and dispositions towards school knowledge. We have to focus at the same time on the whole set of relations in production which are developed between, on the one hand, teachers and “students’ cultural capital” and, on the other, teachers and the form of the curriculum. Hence, a standardised curriculum might cause difficulties and problems for teachers’ work in all areas, as our findings show, but the nature of the difficulties and problems as well as the way of dealing with them depends also on the general “quality” of the material called “students”, in short, on their *cultural capital* and their *habitus* towards school work and knowledge. Without this element in mind, there is always a danger of perceiving the form of the official curriculum as the sole and main element - as the labour process theory does - which either facilitates or hinders teachers’ work. It is precisely this kind of approach that we argue is partial, in that it does not take into consideration the whole set of teachers’ labour processes, namely, the relations of and relations in production. It is this form of labour process, more precisely, the relationship between teachers and the curriculum as mediated by the students’ presence, which contributes to the educational production process.

The above differentiations in findings related to teachers’ work experiences between two different socio-economic areas, as specified in the model of Desmes, can be inscribed in the theoretical discussion of the relationship between structure and agency. Structure and agent should not be seen as separate entities but, instead,

as we discussed in the second Chapter, "in order to challenge the deterministic approach of the relationship between state and schooling, analysis has to focus on the interplay of structure and human agency in the internal workings of the school - in the classrooms - in specific social contexts" (p. 30). Thus, according to our theoretical approach, structure/Desmes is not equally restrictive in both cases of teachers. It is restrictive in the case of teachers teaching in working class areas, but non-restrictive in the case of teachers working in middle/upper class areas.

According to our findings, the majority of teachers in middle/upper class areas, irrespective of gender, specialisation and seniority, report that:

*...teaching Desmes can be said to: stimulate teachers' creativity and encourage intervention. (Q 11)*

The above findings support our hypothesis that proletarianisation should not be considered a homogeneous process whenever we have to deal with prescribed and standardised curricula, as the labour process theory seems to imply, since there are, as we discussed in the second Chapter, variations in "students' 'cultural capital' and *habitus* towards knowledge.

In other words, the differences between the findings in the two socio-economic settings cannot be adequately understood if we use as our theoretical and conceptual framework that of the established labour process theory, which can be schematically mapped as a one-way relationship between the structure/prescribed curriculum/Desmes and human agency/teachers, which is supposed to lead teachers' proletarianisation: prescribed/standardised curriculum → teachers' proletarianisation (Apple, 1985, 1986, 1988; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1986; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Harris, 1982; Lawn, 1985; Lawn & Grace, 1987; Lawn & Ozga, 1981; Ozga, 1988; Ozga & Lawn, 1981; White, 1983). The same can be said about Reid's recent work. Also, Reid's contribution cannot help us to interpret and understand the variations in the findings from the two socio-economic areas because he focuses on the state control of teachers' labour process, which he presents as homogeneous and non-differentiated. And how could it be otherwise,

when he does not conceptualise and theorise the social parameter of students' cultural capital.

In contrast, we argue that the factor "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards school knowledge cannot be easily bypassed and neglected, as the labour process theory does, when we study teachers' labour process, since this plays a vital role, as our findings show, in shaping teachers' work experiences; also, its role is vital to social class reproduction of students and class position of teachers.

This means that "students' cultural capital" and, in general, students' *habitus* towards knowledge constitute a structure which, like standardised curricula, may be restrictive or non-restrictive and can contribute to or undermine the proletarianisation process. Hence, according to the findings, the proletarianisation thesis is confirmed only in cases of teachers working in areas where the social class location of the school is that of the working class, namely, when students come from working class families. In middle/upper class areas, however, although the curriculum is the same and is characterised by teachers as prescribed and standardised (Q 14), it cannot be argued that proletarianisation is confirmed. Students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge play the decisive role in this case.

Thus, the argument that prescribed and standardised curricula contribute to teachers' proletarianisation has to be modified as follows: prescribed and standardised curricula facilitate teachers' proletarianisation only in cases where students' *habitus* towards knowledge is narrowly instrumentalist. When the reverse is the case, as the findings show, prescribed and standardised curricula do not restrict teachers' work. Gender, teachers' specialisation and seniority, the three parameters related to teachers as working people which we developed theoretically in Chapter 2, cannot be said, as the findings indicate, to play a decisive role in shaping and differentiating teachers' work experiences with prescribed and standardised curricula. The differentiations in our findings are differentiations between teachers in the two different social settings and not variations within the same social setting related to gender, specialisation and seniority. This derives from teachers' answers to Questions 11 and 14 of the questionnaire, which have to do

with the issue of restrictions and control of teachers' labour process and from Question 28 of the semi-structured interview, which has to do with the role of the curriculum and students' cultural capital in teachers' work experiences. In all these cases, no differences between the two sexes, the two specialisations or the three seniority groups were identified.

From the above discussion, it can be inferred that the two groups of teachers understand their daily work in different ways because the objective conditions of their work are not the same. More specifically, although the curriculum (the instrument of work) is the same, since it is given by the state to both groups of teachers, the "object" of their work, namely, "students", is not the same. Their students have different cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. The two groups of teachers have a different relationship with the means of production.

Turning now, to our second main issue, this differentiation, in turn, affects teachers' class position. Hence, it can be argued that the teachers who work with students from working class families share a proletarianised class position, because they are not able to control their labour process. This is not the case for those teachers working with students from middle/upper class families. The teachers' class position in the second group can be characterised as semi-autonomous, as we discussed in Chapter 2 (p.p. 49-50), because they are employed by the capital or the state, like workers, and they do not control the means of production as a whole; however, unlike workers and like the petty bourgeoisie, they do manage to exercise control over their labour process (Wright, 1979, p.203).<sup>68</sup> This can be inferred from the fact that they do not experience any restrictions of their autonomy and that they can also negotiate the teaching practice with their students.

This does not happen in working class areas, where most of the teachers experience restrictions of their autonomy and fail to develop any kind of negotiation between themselves and their students. According to our findings teachers are not conscious of their "proletarianised" class position in working class areas. Although they report that standardised curricula – Desmes - restrict their autonomy and the pace and sequence of teaching are determined by the requirements of the exams, that their

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<sup>68</sup> See the discussion on teachers' class location in Ch. 2.7.

students are not demanding at all and that the lack of time is a source of stress, teachers do not agree with the statement (Q 10/c) that *teaching Desmes at a school means that the essence of teaching is the coverage of the syllabus rather than the quality of teaching*.

It seems to be difficult for them to accept, if not hard to bear, that their work is simply a processing and transmission of predetermined material for the General exams requirements and that they are being proletarianised as well as being incorporated into the reproduction of a proletariat. In this respect, they have a false consciousness about their objective work conditions. They need to believe that their work is something more than merely the coverage of the syllabus, and in this way they want to differentiate themselves from teachers working at frontesteria. They consider teachers at frontesteria not to be doing substantial, serious work.

This also follows from teachers' responses to Question 23 of the questionnaire, where it is reported in both social areas that teachers' work at frontesteria is exactly the *coverage of syllabus and the formalisation and standardisation of knowledge*. Frontesteria are seen by state school teachers working in both areas as *places where only preparation for the exams takes place; they cannot be considered educational places where real knowledge and critical thinking is developed*. This view that the differences between teachers at schools and those at frontesteria have to do with the formalisation and standardisation of knowledge (Q 23) marks the difference between the two and helps teachers in secondary schools to see themselves as something qualitatively different; they ascribe a "social mission" to themselves which shows society that their work is something different and superior compared to that of teachers at frontesteria.

Although both groups of teachers agree that frontesteria and Lycea share the same aim, namely, the preparation for the General exams (Q 22), that students pay more attention to frontesteria and that this causes problems to their teaching (Qs 17/b, 17/c), they do not consider their work to be as formalised and as standardised as that at frontesteria. Thus, the disempowering role of frontesteria is not recognised. On the contrary, they believe that the work done at schools is qualitatively different, "substantial", as it is reported (Q 19). However, it is only the majority of

teachers in working class areas, who report that Desmes restrict their autonomy (Q 11). For these teachers the students' educational background is too poor, so they cannot work as they would like to. Here, teachers are conscious of the decisive role that students' cultural capital and *habitus* play for knowledge.

All the above leads us to argue that teachers in working class areas do not seem to be conscious of the objective conditions of educational production, namely, of the procedural character of their work, because although they describe their daily work as soul-destroying and not satisfactory, they seem unable to understand that their work has the same characteristics as that of teachers at frontesteria. The above findings may be taken to show that teachers share a *false consciousness* as far as their work conditions are concerned.

This can be inferred from the fact that on the one hand they report that Desmes, as standardised curricula, restrict their autonomy and that they cannot go beyond their immediate requirements, because their students cannot follow them, and that frontesteria have the same aim as schools, while, on the other, they report that the work done at schools is superior and more substantial compared to that at frontesteria. Apparently, there is a contradiction which has to do with their understanding of the work done by them at schools and that done at frontesteria.<sup>69</sup> Teachers think that the procedural character of the work is a distinctive feature of frontesteria, that it is the *specific distinction* which characterises the work done at frontesteria and makes the difference between teachers' work at schools and that at frontesteria.

This contradiction is also present in other responses. Here, they report that, on the one hand, Desmes restrict their autonomy (Q 11) and that Desmes are standardised courses (Q 14), but, on the other hand (Q 18 of the questionnaire), that they do not want to work at frontesteria because the work there is standardised and formalised,

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<sup>69</sup> Here, I would like to point out, from my personal contact with teachers of both groups at schools, that they had a very negative mood and approach whenever they faced questions concerning frontesteria. In some cases they did not want to respond to the questionnaire and had to be persuaded. All this indicates that frontesteria is for them a world that they do not respect, although they know it, indeed, they send their children there. This can be also inferred from the fact that a number of teachers did not respond to the open questions concerning frontesteria.

whereas theirs is substantial. In short, they cannot see the similarly standardised character of work in both settings: their own schools and frontesteria.

The fact that they do not realise the procedural character of their work and that they ascribe it exclusively to the work of teachers at frontesteria can be also identified in their responses to Questions 10/f, 10/g and 10/h, where teachers are asked about the control exercised by the Directory through the form which is sent to them. Both groups of teachers report that they do not see it as a form of control which should be seriously taken into account and considered as a source of stress. This can be explained by the fact that they have internalised the needs and the demands of the power system (Directory) to such a degree that the official control (Appendix V) cannot be understood and experienced as a mechanism of control of their labour process. They have developed a self-discipline and self-surveillance whereby the control exercised by the educational authorities is not seen as a source of stress. This makes them work in accordance with the guidelines and the demands of the educational authorities, without any further need of criticising them. We can discern this in their responses to Question 24 which has to do with sources of stress and dissatisfaction. Their answers to Q 24/a show that "lack of autonomy" is not categorised amongst the most important sources of stress.

In general, it can be argued that if teachers in working class areas had to choose between two factors which are problematic for their work, they would consider the students' inability to follow their teaching and their poor attitude to school (Q 24/b) more problematic than the standardised and prescribed character of Desmes. This can also be identified in two cases: a) teachers' reports (Q 24/a) related to the sources of stress, where "lack of autonomy" is not considered as a source of much or extreme stress for the majority of teachers in both groups, irrespective of gender, specialisation and seniority and b) their reports in Question 28 of the interview, where for them the students' educational background is more important than the curriculum. Hence, although teachers in working class areas say that Desmes restrict their autonomy and that they cannot go beyond them, this does not cause much stress because they think that the *real* problem is the "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge and not the standardised character of Desmes as such (Q 17 of the semi-structured interview). The above findings



confirm our hypothesis that it is the students' cultural capital and dispositions towards knowledge that play the main role in shaping teachers' work experiences.

In addition, this can be easily derived from the fact that although teachers in working class areas are not satisfied with teaching Desmes (Q 25 of the questionnaire) and one would imagine that they would like not to do so, they, nevertheless, say that they do not want to stop teaching Desmes and explain this by referring to students. More specifically, they say that students are interested more in Desmes compared to other courses (Core courses). This means that they choose the situation which causes them comparatively fewer problems and less stress. They prefer teaching Desmes because the other alternative (Core courses) causes them even more discipline problems, whereas teaching Desmes gives them a relative degree of satisfaction, as they work with students who are - relatively speaking - more interested in Desmes (since Desmes subjects form part of the General exams) than Core courses, so they pay attention to them and are not noisy (Q 28 of the questionnaire).

In relation to the above point, teachers, once again, refer to students as the mediating factor which plays a crucial role in their work. They identify their labour process with students' cultural capital and their disposition towards knowledge, the "object" of their work, and neglect the nature of the other means of production, namely, the curriculum. It seems that they do not conceive of their labour process *as such* as this is experienced by them in the given context of Desmes, but consider it in a relative way; that is, they assess it against the possible alternatives, such as teaching Core courses, for example, compared to which it is found better (Qs 27, 28 of the questionnaire). As they characteristically report (Q 25 of the semi-structured interview):

*...I consider [Desmes] to be the highest step of teaching in secondary education...* (man, Mathematician, 18 years at schools, 14 years in Desmes)

The relativity of their awareness of their work can be also traced in their reports concerning their experiences before Desmes were introduced, where they indicate that the situation was better as far as the restrictions of their autonomy and control

over their labour process are concerned.

It can be argued that it is their consciousness of being *relatively* satisfied that hinders the formation of demands which would constitute resistance to the standardised and controlled character of their labour process. The reported feeling of "relative satisfaction" they get prevents them from seeing their labour process *as such* without comparing it to other possible alternatives, such as teaching "Core" subjects. Therefore, this approach contributes to and facilitates the process of their proletarianisation.

The importance of the factor "students' cultural capital" and dispositions towards knowledge, compared to the demands of the required curriculum, indicates that the "key" to understanding teachers' work problems is considered to be the "students' cultural capital"; the curriculum tends to be ignored. It can be said that teachers *fetishise* these students as the factor which is responsible for all the problems in their teaching work. We say "fetishise" because they ascribe to them properties, such as inability and poor attitude to work, which they see as natural and in this way they ignore the social and cultural character of those characteristics.

Thus, for teachers in working class areas, the restrictive character of the curriculum – Desmes - does not seem to constitute a major source of stress (Q 24). This is because they are unable to conceive of or imagine a situation where restrictions of autonomy and control imposed by central educational authorities would not be the case. It can be argued that they have *naturalised* their position in the labour process as executors of the orders and guidelines of the state educational authorities and cannot escape from this model of their labour process. They do not perceive the social and historical character of the structure of their labour process. This means that they do not see it as a social product which is the outcome of political structures, such as the state, or as a manifestation of class struggle.

The above remarks lead us to argue that the process of "disempowerment" of teachers at schools in working class areas, as well as that of the "empowerment" of teachers at frontesteria, is already under way, but teachers are unable to realise it, because if they accepted it, they would not have a *raison d'etre* for their work in

schools (Q 17a, b). All these illustrate the teachers' class position, in working class areas, as executors of the guidelines of the educational authorities (the state), who are also not conscious of the objective conditions of their work and, consequently, of the process of their proletarianisation. This means that they hardly realise that they do not exercise control on their means of production, like proletarians, which in turn inhibits their formation of demands for autonomy and transformation of the education relations of production.

In middle/upper class areas things are different as far as the issues of teachers' autonomy are concerned. Teachers here report that although they are considered standardised courses (Q 14 of the questionnaire), Desmes do not restrict their autonomy. On the contrary, most of them say that Desmes stimulate their creativity and encourage their intervention (Q 11 of the questionnaire). In this case, with the help of students' "cultural capital" and disposition towards knowledge, teachers can easily face the restrictions posed by the requirements of Desmes and even go beyond them, as they say that their students are demanding (Q 31 of the interview). Their primary concern is not strictly defined by the requirements of Desmes, which are seen as the framework, not an immediate objective, as it is reported:

*...the primary aim is the training of logic, the way of thinking mathematically. Desmes is only the framework within which I have to work... (man, mathematician, 19 years at school, 14 in Desmes)*

Here, as in working class areas, it can also be said that a process of disempowerment of school and a concurrent one of the empowerment of frontesteria do exist. This argument, as discussed in the Chapter referring to the Greek case, is confirmed by teachers' reports, irrespective of gender, specialisation and seniority, according to which frontesteria play the first role in preparing students for the General exams (Q 17/a) and students pay more attention to them (Q 17/b). The above statement is also supported by students' reports of a "good" teacher as one who has *very good knowledge of the subject and is well-informed*. Hence, students in middle/upper class areas give priority to knowledge and mastery of the subject, whereas in working class areas students report that a "good" teacher is the one who *makes the lesson simple and understandable for the exams*. In short,

the students' reports on what a "good" teacher is reflect the variations in their cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. In the first case, students' dispositions towards knowledge are broader in relation to those in the second that are narrower.

In middle/upper class areas the management of the factor "time" by teachers is different, compared to that in working class areas. In this case, time is used for meeting the requirements of Desmes, *but* also for going beyond them. The frontesteria probably play a complementary role in teachers' work and facilitate their efforts to go beyond Desmes. Students here attend frontesteria and/or have private lessons (7 attend frontistirio, 8 have private lessons and 8 both, whereas in working class only 3 in 24 have private lessons, the others attend only frontistirio). Hence, students who have both private lessons and attend frontesteria enrich their cultural capital even more (because these students already have a positive disposition towards knowledge, as they come from middle/upper class families) and this facilitates teachers' work even further. In working class areas "time" is more heavily demanded for Desmes. As it was characteristically reported (Q 19 of the interview), the goal set by teachers is to meet the requirements of the General exams:

*...in Desmes the aim has to be to teach students the specific amount of things in order for them to be able to succeed in the exams...*(woman, historian, 16 years at school, 11 years in Desmes)

The teachers' labour process in middle/upper class areas is easier than in working class areas and this is because, along with frontesteria/private lessons, the teachers' work is supported by the students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge in their effort to go beyond the narrow context of the prescribed demands of Desmes. These two establishments (school - frontistirio) apparently perform two clear-cut functions: the school prepares students for the General exams but also goes beyond students' immediate needs and demands and the frontistirio solely prepares them for the General exams. In working class areas both establishments prepare students for the General exams. This is because in working class areas the students' cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge do not help teachers -

although students attend frontistirio - to go beyond the exams requirements, so the school plays the preparatory role for the exams. The above picture manifests, once again, the different objective working conditions between the two groups of teachers and, consequently, their different class position.

The above observations concerning the working class labour process lead us to think about the possible effects this can have on the development of demands for changing and overcoming this unsatisfactory work situation. To be more specific, it seems that although teachers in working class areas - where they face restricted autonomy, indifferent students, and dissatisfaction - refer to the above issues as problems related to their work, they are not able to translate this negative and alienated feeling and understanding into an opposing attitude towards this oppressive situation. In other words, they are unable to imagine themselves outside this working framework and, consequently, this restricts the development of demands concerning their autonomy and control of their labour process. It is difficult to develop such consciousness, since in order for this to be realised what is needed is the development of a consciousness of the objective work conditions, namely, of the *means of* and *relations in* production which define their labour process.

Thus, the findings show us that there are serious differences between the two groups of teachers as far as the power relations are concerned. Teachers working in working class areas, as the data show, do not have as much power, compared to teachers in middle/upper class areas, of controlling their labour process; in other words, it is not easy for them to resist the requirements of Desmes (Qs 14, 26 of the semi-structured interview) and go beyond them, because students are not intellectually demanding and when teachers first try to introduce them to something which is not part of the requirements Desmes, they do not follow and, indeed, resist the teachers (Q 31 of the semi-structured interview).

This attitude towards Desmes is also confirmed by students (Qs 8, 9 of the semi-structured interview with students), who report that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy and think that the teachers' role has to be a frontistirial one for the lesson to be understandable. The teachers' role is to prepare them for the General exams

(Qs 7, 16 of the semi-structured interview with students). As teachers characteristically report, the students' reaction to their efforts to go beyond the framework of Desmes is:

*...this is not included in the exams. I do not need it...* (man, mathematician, 23 years at school, 14 years in Desmes)

These differences in teachers' power concerning issues such as their autonomy and control of their labour process could be argued to facilitate the reproduction of the relations of capitalist production. This means that in working class areas teachers fail to resist the restrictions imposed by the prescribed nature of Desmes and contribute to the broadening of students' educational horizons beyond the framework prescribed by the educational authorities. In other words, the educational context of school in working class areas facilitates solely the procedural role of school and hinders the development of an emancipatory one. Teachers here, as collective workers, seem to be working solely for the reproduction of labour power. This failure to resist the restrictions imposed by Desmes is remarkable, because it has to do with those students who come from working class families and they are the ones who particularly need school to broaden their cultural capital and develop their *habitus* towards knowledge, in order not to remain attached to the narrow framework of exams requirements<sup>70</sup>.

In short, although teachers in working class areas report that:

1. Desmes restrict their autonomy,
  2. it is difficult to resist the requirements of Desmes and go beyond the prescribed by the educational authorities curriculum, and that
  3. frontesteria play the main role in preparing students for the General exams,
- they are unable to see that they, as teachers, are not -along with Lyceum- "necessary" for students and could be considered redundant, because the work done by them at schools - preparation for the entrance exams - is adequately done by frontesteria. In short, they are not aware of their position in the education production process and their class position, which is directly related to this and

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<sup>70</sup> Here we are not in any case using a deficit theory of working class culture but we refer to the instrumentalist relationship which students from the working class have with knowledge.

which we described as proletarianised.

Instead of recognising the above situation, teachers report that the work done at school is “essential” compared to that at frontesteria which is standardised and formalised. Within this setting we characterise teachers’ presence as redundant because, on the one hand the requirements of Desmes, that is, the preparation for the General exams, are fulfilled by frontesteria and on the other, teachers, according to their reports, fail to go beyond the requirements of Desmes and thus fail to give students something more, something which is not provided by frontesteria, but which teachers in middle/upper class areas do seem to provide.

The above work conditions do not seem to have been understood by teachers in working class areas. Instead, they share a false consciousness about the objective conditions of their work. This, in turn, hinders the formation and the development of demands and activities which would transform their labour process.

As for teachers in middle/upper class areas, it can be argued that they also share a false consciousness, as far as the role of students’ cultural capital and dispositions towards knowledge are concerned. This is because, as they report, they believe that the fact that Desmes do not restrict their autonomy, but on the contrary stimulate their creativity and intervention has essentially to do with themselves as persons. It is a matter of the teacher’s personal diligence, zeal and capability to overcome the prescribed framework of Desmes; students’ cultural capital and habitus towards knowledge are considered to be the same for all students (Qs 13 and 21 of the interview).

These teachers are unable to perceive the educational production process as a labour process constituted by the “object” and the “instruments” of work, which are the means of production. In other words, they ignore the significance of the students, the “object” of their work and the facilitating role which students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge play in confirming their self-assessed status as good teachers. They are unable to perceive the social inequalities related to students’ socio-economic background and think that all students share the same educational capacities. This inability is not a matter of cultural deficit, but an issue

of non-consciousness of the class character of the school; it is inscribed within a broader social context which is characterised by a particular class structure and reflects the social inequalities of the specific class society.

To summarise, our findings partially confirm our hypothesis that the factor “students’ cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge plays a structuring role as far as teachers’ perceptions of their work is concerned. We say “partially” because, from our analysis of the empirical data, what makes *the* difference for teachers’ proletarianisation is students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. The proletarianisation thesis seems to be confirmed only for the majority of teachers who teaching in working class areas where the “students’ cultural capital” is narrow and their *habitus* towards knowledge is narrow-minded. Teachers’ class position in this case can be characterised as proletarianised because teachers cannot exercise control over their labour process.

In middle/upper class areas it cannot be argued that teachers are being proletarianised because students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge help most of the teachers to successfully confront the restrictions and controls imposed by educational authorities on their labour process through the prescribed and standardised curriculum. Teachers’ class position here is characterised as semi-autonomous because they have a degree of control over their labour process.

Thus, proletarianisation cannot be seen, as discussed in the second Chapter, as a homogeneous process which happens whenever we face prescribed and standardised curricula.



## Part III

### Chapter 8 : Conclusions

Having presented and discussed the findings of the empirical study, we will finish this piece of research with the presentation of the conclusions, which will proceed from the general to more specific issues. In particular, first we will present the conclusions concerning the labour process theory and its argument on teachers' proletarianisation and then we will report the conclusions related to the specific Greek educational case.

Before we report the conclusions which this study supports, we have to remind ourselves of the hypotheses we developed, or to name it differently, the departure point of the "theoretical journey" that led us to the conclusions, the end of the journey. The stimulus and the core of our hypotheses is the proletarianisation thesis as applied to Greek teachers. More specifically, we criticised the whole body of literature on the labour process theory in education, both the one developed in the '80s and that by Reid more recently. We stressed the need for a reconsideration and renovation of the labour process theory, a need which is also stressed by Reid. In particular, we criticised the whole body of literature where it fails to offer a viable, systematic and explicit conceptual framework for teachers' labour process. Both theoretical approaches - the one developed in the '80s and Reid's, very recently, do not take into consideration the "object" of teachers' work, namely, "students" and especially "students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge. In short, we argue that "students' cultural capital" is *the* factor, in relation to the key issues examined - namely, teachers' gender, specialisation and seniority - which makes the difference as far as the proletarianisation of the teachers' labour process is concerned.

According to the discussion in the second chapter, which refers to the theoretical and conceptual framework, the hypothesis we formulated is that a process of proletarianisation has been taking place in the Greek educational context with the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula - Desmes. It is a process whereby teachers' autonomy and control over their labour process are becoming

increasingly restricted.

In accordance with our theoretical and conceptual argument, we structured the empirical part of the study into two sections (working and middle/upper class areas), using as a criterion the “object” of teachers’ labour process, namely, “students”, but students with variations in their “cultural capital” and *habitus* towards knowledge.

As the presentation of the main tendencies of the findings shows, the two groups of teachers do not experience the restrictions imposed by the introduction of standardised curricula –Desmes – in the same way. To be more specific, only the majority of teachers working with students who come from working class families realise that Desmes restrict their autonomy and creativity. The majority of teachers working with students who come from middle/upper class families report that Desmes stimulate teachers’ creativity and encourage intervention.

All this means that the proletarianisation of the teachers’ labour process cannot be seen as a homogeneous process which all teachers uniformly undergo. More specifically, according to the findings, teachers working with students from middle/upper class families cannot be argued to be proletarianised since, as they report, the prescribed and standardised curricula –Desmes– do not restrict their autonomy and control of their labour process but, on the contrary, stimulate their creativity and encourage their intervention. They report that students pay more attention to frontesteria than to schools, but because they work with demanding students they manage to control their labour process and thus they see Desmes as stimulating courses. In contrast, as the findings show, teachers working with students from working class families are being proletarianised.

According to the analysis of our empirical data, the introduction of prescribed and standardised curricula has led to restrictions of autonomy and control over the labour process of teachers working with students who have a working class socio-economic background. This is due to students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge, which does not help teachers to overcome the narrow framework of the prescribed curriculum. As the empirical data show, students who come from

working class families have an instrumental relationship with school knowledge. More specifically, teachers' efforts to expand their teaching beyond the prescribed and predetermined framework of the curriculum face the students' resistance and reaction against what they claim is not useful for the General exams. In short, students seem to have a utilitarian relationship with knowledge. For them, only knowledge which is of immediate use for realising formal credentials needs to be gained.

The majority of teachers working with students who come from the middle/upper class can overcome the restricted framework of the predetermined curriculum without experiencing any feeling of restrictions of their autonomy. These students are demanding and even when this is not the case, if the teacher tries to overcome the prescribed framework and expand teaching beyond it, students follow him/her. It is students' *habitus* towards school knowledge that facilitates teachers' work with standardised curricula and prevents them from experiencing any restrictions on their autonomy concerning the organisation of their teaching. Consequently, these teachers are not being proletarianised.

According to our findings, the two groups of teachers do not share the same work conditions, because the "object" of their work is not the same. Their students possess different cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge. They have different relationships with their means of production. In working class areas teachers are not able to control their labour, whereas this is not the case in middle/upper class areas. This situation affects teachers' class position, which in working class areas can be described as proletarianised and in middle/upper class areas as semi-autonomous.

Thus, as the findings indicate, "the students' cultural capital" plays the most crucial role, compared to gender, specialisation and seniority, in shaping teachers' work experiences and perceptions of their labour process. This is deduced from the fact that the only variations which can be identified in their reports are between the two groups of teachers (teachers working with students from working class families and teachers working with students from middle/upper class families), and not between sexes, specialisations and groups of seniority. This can be easily inferred from

teachers' answers to Questions 11 and 14 of the questionnaire concerning the issues of autonomy in relation to the standardised curricula called Desmes. The students' cultural capital seems to play the decisive role as far as the proletarianisation thesis is concerned.

From the findings of this study it can be argued that we cannot talk about "teachers' labour process" in general and that we should bear in mind that this is not a homogeneous process. There are variations and these have to do with the "object" of their labour process, namely, students and, more specifically, "the students' cultural capital".

As the findings show, the proletarianisation thesis should be reconsidered and reconceptualised, after teachers' labour process is first reconceptualised. Thus, the theoretical tools for approaching and investigating teachers' labour process should be enriched by introducing a new parameter, namely, "the students' cultural capital" and *habitus* towards knowledge. Teachers' labour process should be seen as a production process consisting of a set of relations *of* and relations *in* production. In this process the "object" of teachers' work, namely, "students" and, more specifically, "the students' cultural capital" intervenes and shapes teaching as a labour process, affects teachers' working experiences and it is *the* factor which contributes to the proletarianisation process. Hence, when the theoretical discussion of the labour process theory does not take "students" into consideration, we have to do with a production process/ labour process without any "object". This is an oxymoron, namely, a scheme of production, and denotes a labour process in need of an object upon which it will take place.

The proposed redesign of the concept of teachers' labour process also leads us to a rethinking of the concept of "resistance" of human agency in the educational context. As our findings indicate, in cases where teachers work with students from the middle/upper class, the students' cultural capital encourages them not to perceive Desmes as restrictive of their classroom autonomy. Thus, teachers' work is facilitated by the students' cultural capital and school goes further than the immediate exams requirements. Moreover, in this case the students' cultural capital is strengthened by frontesteria, as most students in middle/upper class areas attend

frontesteria and have private lessons as well. This does not happen in working class areas, where most students attend only frontistirio. In other words, in this case we cannot say that it is teachers who manage to resist the restrictions of the standardised character of Desmes, but it is the “object” of their labour process, namely, students, who play the decisive role as far as the understanding of their labour process is concerned.

This is not the case for the majority of teachers working with students from working class families. Although teachers here try, they fail to overcome the restricted framework of the prescribed curricula and, consequently, school work is focused on the preparation for the exams. However, the preparation for the General exams is also performed by frontesteria in the Greek educational context. As our findings indicate, the frontesteria play a negative role as far as teachers’ work at schools is concerned. Students pay more attention to frontesteria, so the work of teachers at schools is devalued and school is thus disempowered.

More specifically, in working class areas teachers cannot overcome the narrow framework of Desmes because students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge do not orient them to do that. This means that working class students’ relationship with knowledge cannot be transformed and they continue to have a predominantly instrumental relationship with school knowledge. This, in turn, leads us to the hypothesis that this situation facilitates the reproduction of the wider relations of production; to put it simply, those who come from working class families will probably get working class jobs in the division of labour.

In both cases, as this study argues, students’ cultural capital and *habitus* towards knowledge play the main role in shaping teachers’ labour process. Teachers’ understanding of their labour process reflects the class character of the school and, for this reason, any demands and struggles for improving their work conditions should be inscribed within the broader context of class struggles for transforming the dominant social order.

As far as the Greek case is concerned, in addition to the above presented general concluding remarks, we can also note the following:

Frontesteria play the main role in preparing students for exams. As it is argued by both groups of teachers, by School Advisors and Teacher unionists, frontesteria have an impact on teachers' labour process at school, because students pay more attention and devote more energy and time to the work of teachers at frontesteria, while they are not interested in school work.

This situation leads us to the following conclusion:

The prescribed curricula (Desmes) which have to do with the preparation of students for the General exams lead to a process of "frontistirisation" for the state school, because the "focus" of the Lyceum is now preparation for the exams, a function which is traditionally ascribed to frontesteria. Thus, the centrality of Desmes/exams in the Lyceum and the great interest of students in frontesteria can be argued to be contributing to a process of "disempowerment" of the state school and a de-skilling of teachers at state schools. This is because in the students' minds frontesteria and the teachers there are specialists compared to schools and teachers at schools, as far as the preparation for the General exams is concerned. The school is not seen by students as an educational site which is or could be qualitatively superior compared to frontesteria. This, at the same time, leads to the "empowerment" of frontesteria in students' minds.

The above process could be seen and explained as an expression of the commodification logic and a use of market criteria which seem to be dominant in students' minds. To be more specific, students describe teachers at frontesteria as better teachers because they work harder, as they fear that they may be dismissed. In contrast, as teachers at schools do not fear that they might be dismissed, they are seen by students as public servants who work in an unconscientious way. Students assess the work done at school and frontesteria in relation to the money they (their parents) pay to get preparation for the exams. The work at frontesteria is considered better compared to that at school because teachers are paid to do this very work. State school students do not pay (at least, not in a direct way) as they do at frontesteria, and so tend to think that teachers' work cannot be compared to that of teachers at frontesteria. Students -consciously or subconsciously- make comparisons and many times do not hesitate to make comments on teachers' work at schools. This attitude influences state school teachers who subsequently tend to

see their work *in relation to* that of teachers at frontesteria.

At the end of this “battle” the winner is frontesteria, as the findings indicate, because frontesteria are organised as businesses aiming at “selling” good preparation for the exams. On the contrary, by definition schools do not aim at preparing students for exams. As students from both middle/upper class and working class families report, the school’s aim should be to offer them knowledge and a general global culture which will contribute to their personal development. This is not the case with the system of prescribed curricula-Desmes, which is unanimously claimed to cancel the Lyceum’s educational role and transform it to an exams preparatory centre. However, the educational “disempowerment” of school (public sector) and the “empowerment” of frontesteria (private sector) are not of equal importance for the two groups of students. This structure is basically harmful to students who come from working class families, because they are the ones who mainly rely on state school. Students who come from middle/upper class families have a domestic setting which is a matrix for their intellectual development in relation to the educational processes being offered. Consequently, the “disempowerment” of school contributes to the strengthening of the social and cultural reproductive role of School as an educational apparatus.

These concluding remarks concerning the frontesteria support our hypothesis that frontesteria play a role in shaping teacher’ labour process at schools.

To the above remarks we would like to add some comments concerning the findings of this study. In particular, two points will be stressed; the first has to do with unanticipated findings and the second one is related to findings which were expected but did not emerge.

In the first category we can classify findings concerning teachers’ views about the way they relate to their labour process. Teachers see their labour process mainly through the perspective of their students’ educational background and ignore the curriculum as a means of educational production. In short, teachers tend to have a partial picture of their labour process. For both groups of teachers, the students’ cultural capital seems to be the main and determining factor for their own self

understanding as professionals. Hence, prescribed and standardised curricula are experienced as mediated through their contact with the specific cultural capital of students. Thus, it is the factor "students" and not the standardised character of the curriculum which restricts teachers' autonomy as far as the organisation of daily teaching is concerned.

The second point we would like to highlight has to do with teachers' views on frontesteria. More specifically, although they stress the negative character of frontesteria for their labour process as well as for students (too much time, energy, money, standardised knowledge), they did not give us the impression that they share a strong desire to have them abolished. The commodification logic is shared by teachers in both cases, since most of them have their own children attend frontesteria. It seems that they consider the presence of frontesteria a necessary evil which they have to accommodate.

At this point we think that it would be interesting to have the reports of teachers at frontesteria and see the way these teachers experience their labour process and what their opinion is of the work done by teachers at schools. The fact that we were unable to get information from teachers at frontesteria is, we think, a weakness of this piece of work. In our efforts to collect data, we requested permission by the owners of frontesteria to have access to teachers working there, but this was not granted. We believe this is a weakness because teachers in the two working contexts need to be fully explored and the two modes of relations *in* educational production need to be compared. We hope that this area will become the research focus of a further study. Also, reflecting on the totality of the study, we would like to express a self-criticism as far as the research design of the study is concerned. To be more concrete, if we started the study now we would have developed another research design. More specifically, we would have selected for semi-structured interviews those not only those teachers whose views are in the majority, and so expressing experiential aspects of the main polarising tendency, but also put the study in the position to examine implications of minority views. Thus, while focusing on the views of the majority of teachers we were able to deepen our understanding of polarising and differentiating aspects of teachers' work experiences between different class locations. However, paying more attention to



minority views would have enabled a wider approach with the possibilities of a more complex and subtle analysis. This could have highlighted some variations within the primary case that has been made for the main tendencies and issues raised when reconsidering the proletarianisation thesis and teachers' labour process.

Before we close this last Chapter and the study, we would like to express some thoughts about the need and the possibilities for further research. A feature which, we think, greatly strengthens a piece of research is the questions it raises and the ideas this produces for further research. Accordingly, we would like to indicate possible areas of further research.

In the light of the conceptual and theoretical framework presented in the second Chapter and the discussion developed in the previous Chapter, a piece of further research could study the various models of control used by the state on teachers' labour process. For example, how are beliefs and ideas such as "good teacher" and "effective teacher", which constitute forms of ideological control, perceived by teachers who work in different social contexts, as far as students' social origin is concerned?

It would be interesting if the same hypotheses could be tested within other social contexts. We say "interesting" because societies are mediated by their own histories and teachers' work should also be seen within the specific socio-historical context where national peculiarities could emerge, such as the case of *frontesteria* in Greece and *juku* in Japan.

Also, another possible area of study could be the exploration of the proletarianisation thesis with reference to teachers in Higher education. More specifically, in the era of the globalisation of economy, when knowledge is considered the major deposit in the world-wide competition for power (Lyotard, 1979, p. 34), it would be interesting to investigate the hypothesis of proletarianisation of those teachers exactly who possess the highest level of knowledge. This would involve exploring whether those who possess knowledge are those who control their labour process and perform the conception and execution function in their labour process, or whether they are simply executioners

of others' orders and guidelines (i.e., Governments, big industries, multi-nationals etc).

Another area for future research could be comparative studies of teachers' class position in specific socio-historical contexts. In this direction it would be interesting to study teachers' class position in Greece after the introduction of the new system of teachers' evaluation and make comparisons with the findings of this piece of research.

Finally, a last but not least important point which we would like to express is our wish for this study to become a departure point, in the Greek context, for studying teachers' labour process after the system of Desmes was transformed, in order to identify similarities or/and differences with that of Desmes, as far as teachers' labour process is concerned. In short, we believe that a study can be said to have produced positive effects when it provides a stimulus for raising new questions, even when answers and solutions may be somewhat elusive.

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## Appendix I

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS AT STATE SCHOOLS

1. School name :
2. Sex : Male ☐, Female ☐
3. Marital status : Married ☐ Married with children ☐  
Divorced ☐, Divorced with children ☐  
Single ☐, Single with children ☐.
4. When did you start working as a teacher at a state school ?  
Write the year
5. Status : Permanent ☐, Do supply teaching ☐.
6. How many years have you been teaching Desmi courses?
7. Specialisation : Mathematician ☐, Greek literature ☐.
8. What are you teaching this year : Mathematics 1st Desmi ☐  
Mathematics 4<sup>th</sup> Desmi ☐, History of 3rd Desmi ☐  
History of 4th Desmi ☐.
9. Have you ever taught at frontistiria ? Yes ☐, No ☐.
- If 'Yes', for how long ? .
- If 'No', what kind of working experience did you have before you started teaching?
10. Now some questions about Desmi courses. The following is a set of statements. For each statement please say whether you **Strongly Agree**, **Agree**, are **Neutral**, **Disagree** or **Strongly Disagree**.  
Tick the appropriate box.

	Str/ly Agr.	Agree	Ne/al	Disag.	Str/ly Disag.
a) Generally speaking, a prescribed curriculum means that teachers' autonomy and control are restricted.					
b) Being a teacher of a Desmi course means that you can teach according to the students' educational needs.					
c) Teaching Desmi at a school means that the essence of teaching is coverage of the syllabus rather than the quality of teaching work.					
d) In a Desmi course the sequence of teaching is to a large degree predetermined.					
e) The assessment of students' progress is related to the capacity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what they are learning, irrespective of the requirements of the General exams.					
f) The Administration sends to school a form asking you to specify what you have already taught (number of page). This is an attempt at controlling your work.					
g) I take the form seriously into account.					
h) The above form is usually a source of stress.					
i) Teaching a Desmi course means that the requirements of the examinations strongly influence the way I teach.					
j) As a teacher of Desmi I give priority to students' educational needs rather than to the exams requirements.					
k) The requirements of Desmi for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of my teaching to a large extent.					

For the next four questions you are invited to choose one of the statements.

11. Teaching Desmi courses can be said to:

- restrict teachers' autonomy ☐.
- stimulate teachers' creativity and encourage intervention ☐.
- have no impact on teachers' work ☐.

12. Teaching Desmi means that I choose my teaching methods mainly according to :

- the requirements of Desmi ☐.
- students' educational needs ☐.
- the unit's requirements ☐.
- other ( to be specified )

13. The pace of teaching mainly depends on :

- the unit's difficulty ☐.
- students' educational needs ☐.
- Desmi requirements ☐.
- other ( to be specified ).

14. Choose one statement:

- Desmi courses are standardised courses and restrict teachers' autonomy ☐.
- Desmi courses are not standardised courses ☐.
- Desmi courses are standardised courses but they do not restrict teachers' autonomy ☐.

15. Teachers teaching Desmi can be considered "better professionals" compared with those teaching Core courses.

Agree ☐, Disagree ☐, No opinion ☐.

16. Teachers teaching Desmi can be considered "better experts" compared with those teaching Core courses.

Agree ☐, Disagree ☐, No opinion ☐.

17. Now some opinions about the following statements concerning frontesteria.

For each statement please say whether you **Strongly Agree**, **Agree**, are **Neutral**,

**Disagree**, or **Strongly Disagree**. Tick the appropriate box.

	Str/ly Agr.	Agree	Ne/al	Disag.	Str/ly Disag.
a) Frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing pupils for entering Higher education in comparison with schools.					
b) Pupils pay more attention to frontesteria than to schools.					
c) The existence of frontesteria causes problems to teachers' work at schools.					
d) Teachers teaching Desmi at frontesteria can be considered as "better professionals" than those at schools.					
e) Teachers teaching Desmi at frontesteria can be considered as "better experts" than those at schools.					
f) Teachers at frontesteria can be considered as more autonomous than teachers at schools, as far as instruction is concerned.					
g) Teaching Desmes at a frontistirio means that the essence of teaching is the coverage of the syllabus rather than the quality of teaching.					
h) Being a teacher of Desmi at a frontistirio means that you can teach according to students' educational needs.					
i) Teaching Desmi at a frontistirio means that the sequence of teaching is to a large extent predetermined.					
j) Teaching Desmi at a frontistirio means that the requirements of Desmi for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of teaching to a large extent.					

18. Would you like to teach at frontesteria ? Yes ☐, No ☐.

19. Can you give reasons for your answer ?

20. If you have children, do you send them to frontesteria ? Yes ☐, No ☐.

21. Can you give reasons for your answer ?

22. What are the similarities between teachers at frontesteria and teachers at schools, as far as teaching Desmi is concerned ?

23. What are the differences between teachers at frontesteria and teachers at schools, as far as teaching Desmi is concerned ?

24. As a teacher of a Desmi course, how great a source of stress are these factors to you ?

	No stress	Mild stress	Moderate stress	Much stress	Extreme stress
a) Lack of autonomy.					
b) Students' indifference to school					
c) Noisy classes.					
d) Too much work to do.					
e) Lack of time to do my work as I would like.					
f) Inadequate salary.					
g) Students' great interest in frontesteria.					
h) Parents' pressures.					
i) Badly designed textbooks.					
j) Poor facilities.					
k) Lack of cooperation with my colleagues.					
l) Lack of involvement of the Teachers' Union in teachers' issues to do with classroom practices.					

25. How satisfied are you with teaching Desmi courses ?  
 Very dissatisfied ☐, Fairly dissatisfied ☐,  
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied ☐, Fairly satisfied ☐,  
 Very satisfied ☐.

26. Would you prefer not to teach a Desmi course? Yes ☐, No ☐.

27. Can you give reasons for your answer ?

28. Can you describe the positive and negative aspects of teaching Desmi at a school.?

29. Can you describe a "good" teacher teaching a Desmi course at school?

For the next two questions you are invited to choose one of the options.

30. Teaching at schools is :  
harder ☐, easier ☐, no different ☐  
in comparison with/ from that at frontesteria.
31. The work at schools is :  
more stressful ☐, less stressful ☐, no different ☐  
in comparison with/ from that at frontesteria.
32. Do you think that it is through collective action that teachers' working conditions can change? Yes ☐, No ☐.
33. Do you think that it is through collective action that changes in the education system can take place? Yes ☐, No ☐.
34. Do you think that the Lyceum is in crisis ? Yes ☐, No ☐  
If not, go to question 36.
35. Do you think that : (choose one )
- the crisis in the Lyceum is part of a socio-economic crisis ? ☐
  - the crisis in the Lyceum is the outcome of the existence of frontesteria ? ☐
  - the crisis in the Lyceum is the outcome of teachers' poor education ? ☐
  - other (to be specified)
36. Can you refer to the role of frontesteria? What is your opinion about them? Do they have any influence on your teaching process?
37. If you had the opportunity to enter another occupation, would you like to leave teaching ? Yes ☐, No ☐.
38. Can you give reasons for your answer?
39. If you had to choose another occupation, what would that be?  
List any occupation you would like.
40. Is there anything you would like to add or emphasise in relation to teaching Desmi and your working experience ?

## Appendix II

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO SCHOOL ADVISORS AND TEACHER UNIONISTS

Headings : autonomy, control, intensification of teachers' work,  
de-skilling and frontesteria.

1. Some questions about Desmi courses. The following is a set of statements. For each statement please say whether you **strongly agree**, **agree**, are **neutral**, **disagree** or **strongly disagree**.

	s.agr.	agree	ne/al	dis.	s.dis.
Generally speaking ,a prescribed curriculum means that teacher's autonomy and control are restricted.					
Teaching Desmi at a school means that a teacher can teach according to the students' educational needs.					
Teaching Desmi at a school means that the essence of teaching is coverage of the syllabus rather than the quality of the teaching work.					
In a Desmi course the sequence of teaching is to a large extent predetermined.					
The assessment of students' progress is related to the capacity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what they are learning, irrespective of the requirements of the General exams.					
The Administration sends to schools a form asking teachers to specify what they have already taught. This is an attempt at controlling teachers' work.					
This form is usually a source of stress for teachers.					
Teaching Desmi means that the examinations requirements strongly influence the way teachers work.					
Teachers teaching Desmi should give priority to students' educational needs rather than to the exams requirements.					
The requirements of Desmi for coverage of the syllabus determine the pace of teaching to a large extent.					

2. Teaching Desmi courses can be said to:  
restrict teachers' autonomy ☐  
stimulate teachers' creativity and encourage intervention ☐  
have no impact on teachers' work ☐.
3. Teachers teaching Desmi should choose teaching methods according to :  
the requirements of Desmi ☐  
students' educational needs ☐  
the unit's requirements ☐  
other (to be specified)
4. The pace of teaching mainly depends on :  
a unit's difficulty ☐  
students' educational needs ☐  
the requirements of Desmi ☐  
other (to be specified)
5. Desmes are standardised courses and they restrict teachers' autonomy ☐  
Desmes are not standardised courses ☐  
Desmes are standardised courses but they do not restrict teachers' autonomy ☐.
6. Teachers teaching Desmes can be considered "better professionals"  
compared with those teaching Core courses.  
Agree ☐, Disagree ☐, No opinion ☐.
7. Teachers teaching Desmes can be considered "better experts"  
compared with those teaching Core courses.  
Agree ☐, Disagree ☐, No opinion ☐.
8. Can you describe a "good" teacher teaching Desmi at schools?



9. Now some opinions about frontesteria. The following is a set of statements about them.

	Str/ly agree	Agree	Neu/al	Disag.	Str/ly disag.
Frontesteria play a secondary role in preparing students for entering Higher education.					
Students pay more attention to frontesteria than to schools.					
The existence of frontesteria causes problems to teachers' work at schools.					
Teachers teaching Desmes at frontesteria can be considered "better professionals" than those at schools.					
Teachers teaching Desmes at frontesteria can be considered "better experts" than those at schools.					
Teachers at frontesteria can be considered as more autonomous than those at schools.					

10. Can you refer to the role of frontesteria? What is your opinion about them? Do they have any influence on teachers' work at schools?

11. Do you think that the Lyceum is in crisis? Yes ☐, No ☐.

12. The crisis of the Lyceum is part of a socio-economic crisis ☐.
- The crisis of the Lyceum is the outcome of the existence of frontesteria ☐.
- The crisis of the Lyceum is the outcome of teachers' poor education ☐.

13. What are the similarities and differences between the work at frontesteria and the work at schools as far as Desmes are concerned?

14. Can you describe the similarities and differences between teachers teaching Desmes and teachers teaching Core courses as far as their working situation is concerned ?

15. What are the positive and negative aspects of the system of Desmes as far as teachers' working conditions are concerned ?
16. Can you describe a "good" teacher teaching a Desmi at a school ?
17. What is the most urgent problem of the Lyceum today ?
18. What are the main administrative problems of state Lycea ?
19. What are the main difficulties, from an administrative point of view, in dealing with those problems ?
20. It is said that the teaching profession is being degraded. Do you agree?  
Can you develop your views in more detail ?

## Appendix III

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH STUDENTS

1. What are your demands from teachers teaching Desmes? (Mathematics, History)
2. Do you attend frontistirio and/or have private lessons?
3. What are the differences between teachers teaching Desmes at schools and those at frontesteria? Are they better, worse? Why?
4. Do you think that frontesteria are necessary?
5. Do you get something "more" from Desmes courses at school (besides the preparation)?
6. If "no", would you prefer teaching at school not to focus on preparation for the General exams?
7. From your experience in Desmes, do teachers try to give more (besides what is required for the exams)?
8. Do you think that Desmes restrict teachers' autonomy?
9. Do you think that the educational background of students plays an important role in teachers' work?
10. Do you think that the educational level of your class is helpful to teachers' work?
11. What you think has to be the aim of the Lyceum?
12. Do you read books (apart from school books)/ go to the cinema/theatre?
13. Is "General exams and university" your top priority, the main aim?
14. If you fail, what will you do then?
15. Give me the portrait of a "good" teacher in Desmes.
16. Do you have anything to add, stress, comment on the system of Desmes?
17. What is your opinion about teachers of Desmes:
  - a) friends, public servants trying to do their best in their work

b) public servants who do not do their work very well.

## Appendix IV

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS.

1. School area:
2. Sex : Male ☐, Female ☐
3. Marital status : Married ☐, Married with children ☐,  
Divorced ☐, Divorced with children ☐,  
Single ☐, Single with children ☐.
4. Specialisation: Mathematician ☐, Historian ☐.
5. Qualifications: Any post-graduate studies? Yes ☐, No ☐  
MA/ MSc ☐, PhD ☐.
6. How many years have you been teaching at state schools? ☐
7. Status: Permanent ☐, Do supply teaching ☐.
8. How many years have you been teaching Desmes? ☐
9. How many years have you been teaching in this area? ☐
10. Have you ever worked in West Attica (poor areas)/ Northern Attica (affluent areas) ? Yes ☐, No ☐.
11. If not, would you like to ? Give reasons for your answer.
12. Have you also been teaching Core courses? Yes ☐, No ☐.
13. Now some questions on your teaching experiences.  
A number of your colleagues have accepted the idea that Desmes stimulate their creativity and encourage their personal intervention. Can you please comment on this and give your own view?
14. Also a number of teachers have accepted the idea that Desmes restrict their autonomy. Can you please comment on this and give your own view?
15. Are you satisfied with your job?

16. Do you think that the system of Desmes plays the main role in making you happy/unhappy with your job? Can you justify your answer?
17. Do you think that the educational background of your students plays the main role in making you happy/unhappy with your job? Can you justify your answer?
18. What is your experience from Core courses?
19. Can you please give me an idea of how you work, in terms of the goals, methods and pacing of your teaching ?
20. Do you use any other materials except the Ministry's textbooks?  
If 'Yes', what exactly? If 'No', why not ?
21. You said that you have worked in West Attica. Can you describe any differences in terms of your teaching experiences (goals, methods, pacing, materials used)?
22. Now some questions related to frontesteria and private lessons.  
It is known that the overwhelming majority of pupils attend frontesteria and/or have private lessons. Do you think this facilitates your work or not, and why ?
23. It is also known that, due to the extremely low salaries, a large number of teachers give private lessons. Do you think that this helps them be good teachers?  
Please justify your answer.

24. Let me present a hypothetical situation. Let us say that a teacher is very much interested in giving private lessons. Could we assume that Desmes push him/her to develop his/her skills and consequently stimulate his/her creativity?
25. What were your working experiences before Desmes, as concerns restrictions imposed on your autonomy? Can you evaluate them?
26. Is it easy for a teacher to resist the requirements of Desmes and follow his/her pedagogic ideas and philosophy as far as the teaching process is concerned?
27. Do you think that the time is enough for you to do your work as you would like?
28. As a teacher, which educational factor do you think is more important: the curriculum or the students' educational background? Why?
29. Do you think that Desmes have contributed to the proliferation of private lessons?
30. Do you think that your work is mainly evaluated through Desmes, or to put another way, through how well you prepare students for the Entrance exams?
31. How demanding are your pupils? Are you satisfied with their educational background?

## **Appendix V**

The form which is sent to teachers by the Directorate.



# DIRECTORATE

ΣΥΓΚΕΝΤΡΩΤΙΚΟΣ ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ

Academic year ΣΧΟΛΙΚΟ ΕΤΟΣ .....1995-96.....

ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ Δ.Ε .....Γ'.....ΑΘΗΝΑΣ.....

1<sup>ο</sup> ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ Δ.Ε

ΥΛΗ ΠΟΥ ΔΙΔΑΧΤΗΚΕ ΜΕΧΡΙ ΚΑΙ .....15-2-1996 (Syllabus taught until 15.2.96)

ΛΥΚΕΙΑ / Lycea (their names)	ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΑ 3ης ΔΕΞΙΜΗΣ / 3 <sup>rd</sup> Desny					ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΑ 4ης ΔΕΞΙΜΗΣ 4 <sup>th</sup>			
	ΑΡΧΑΙΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ / Ancient Greek				ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ / History	ΛΑΤΙΝΙΚΑ / Latin	ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΙΚΑ / Maths	ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ / History	ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑ / Pol. Economy
	Οιδίπους Τύραννος	Επιτάφιος	Ανθολόγιο	Θεματογραφία	Μέχρι και σελίδα	Μέχρι και Κ.Α	Μέχρι και σελίδα	Μέχρι και σελίδα	Μέχρι και σελίδα
	Μέχρι και Κ.Α	Μέχρι και Κ.Α	Μέχρι και Κ.Α	Αριθμός θεμάτων					
1 <sup>ο</sup> Λύκειο Αιγάλεω	49	8	5	25	274	(28)	208	265	159
2 <sup>ο</sup> Λύκειο Αιγάλεω	49	(6)	5	(17)	301	43	205	302	188
3 <sup>ο</sup> Λύκειο Αιγάλεω	49	8	5	32	258	35	220	238	163
4 <sup>ο</sup> Λύκειο Αιγάλεω	49	8	(3)	20	272	31	207	Γ4Ι 272 Γ4Π 319	161
5 <sup>ο</sup> Λύκειο Αιγάλεω	49	7	4	21	(232)	29	208	(232)	187
Εσπερινό Λύκειο Αιγάλεω							204	284	158
1 <sup>ο</sup> Τ.Ε.Λ. Αιγάλεω									

DEL  
LONDIN  
UNIV.

Παρατήρηση: Οπου υπάρχει κύκλος παρατηρείται καθυστέρηση  
Παρακαλούμε να επισπεύσετε τη διδασκαλία.

Remark: The existence of "circle" means that there is some delay  
Please teach at a quicker pace.



ΤΟΥ ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟΥ Δ.Ε

ΔΗΜ. ΒΕΣΙΛΕΜΕΙ